THE LIFE OF THE GLORIOVS VIRGIN S. CLARE.

Togeather with the Conuersion, and life of S. *Agnes* her sister.

And of another S. Agnes, *Daughter to the King of* Bohemia.

Also the Rule of S. Clare. And the life of S. Catharine of Bologna.

Translated into English,

Permissu Superiorum, M. DC. XXIII.

BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·
DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA

TO THE MOST GLORIOVS *Virgin S. Clare.*

Most Glorious Saint,

BEING to publiſh thy Bleſſed *Life*, trāſlated into Engliſh for the publik benefit of our Coūtry; I found no creature heere on Earth, ſeeming worthy inough, to be preſented therewith, by way of Dedication: And therfore, were my Thoughts preſently, tranſported hence to the glorious Cittizens of Heauen; whither ariuing, they forthwith made choice of thy Bleſ-

sed *Selfe*, as best (& in particuler) deseruing so true an Honour.

Accept then (B. Saint) this my small labour which in all Humility & Reuerence I heere offer vnto thy Holy NAME, togeather with my vnworthy *Selfe*; that by thy Intercession, & Piety, I may be made partaker of some little glimpse of that spiritual Influence, which out of the huge Masse of thy Glorious merits, thou vouchsafest to impart vnto thy deuout Suppliants; amongst whom I humbly begge (O Glorious Virgin) to be accepted for one.

I. W.

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CHAP. I.

SIx yeares after the conuerſiõ of the holy Father S. *Francis*, & the fourth yeare, after the confirmation of his Rule by Pope Innocent

the third, the yeare of grace 1212: the omnipotent Father of light, hauing framed, and ſent into the world a new man, his ſeruant S. *Francis*, by him to repayre, and reforme his faithful people in that age: would alſo, that a valourous woman ſhould by his worke appeare in the world, to accompany that his great, & faythfull ſeruant, to the end, that of thoſe two, ſhold be new borne a perfect regeneration of the children of God. And as the firſt naturall generation came of man and woman, as of an vnited beginning: ſo this ſpirituall generation of the imitatours of the life and counſailes of Ieſus Chriſt proceeded in al the Church, and in all the eſtates, and qualityes of perſons, of the one & ſame

ſpirit

ſpirit of zeale, of perfection, of humility, and of pouerty, from one man, and one woman. And to the end it might not be vnlike the creation, almighty God hauing firſt perfected his ſeruant S. *Francis*, would frame of the ribb, or ſide of his life, doctrine and Santy, the glorious Virgin S. *Clare*, his true, and legitimate daughter in Ieſus Chriſt for his companion, as zealous alſo of perfection, and angelicall reformation. With great reaſon therfore hath ſhe her place in the Chronicles of the Friars Minors; for ſhe being a ribbe, and party of the ſame order, it is very requiſite a ſpeciall mention ſhould be made of her ſanctity of life, as we ſhall heere performe: and if it be not according to her merit, ſhall

at leaſt be done, with the leaſt defect we can poſſible; being reſolued to imploy therein, that little force of ſpirit, which God hath giuen vs, both to the honour of his diuine maieſty, & his holy ſeruant, and to the edification of ſoules.

The glorious S. *Clare* was borne in the Citty of *Aſſiſiū* in *Italy*, ſcituate in the prouince of the valley of *Spoletum*, which is a territory apperteyning to the Pope, and Roman Church. Her Father and Mother were noble, of a famous and very welthy family: her Mother was called *Hortulana*, which in our tounge may be tearmed Gardener, and not without miſtery, conſidering ſhe was to produce ſo noble, and vertuous a plant, in the garden of the holy Church. This woman

woman was exceeding deuout, and compleate in the fruites of good workes: and albeit she were marryed, and consequently obliged to the care, and gouernement of her house, and family, yet did she not omit with all her power to be exercised in the seruice of God, and imployed in the works of mercy.

She was so feruent in the loue of Iesus Christ, that with great deuotion she passed the sea with many other pilgrimes, & visited those holy places, which our Redeemer Iesus Christ God and man, consecrated with his holy presence, and retourned exceedingly comforted, and inriched with many meritts. She also visited the Church of the Archangell Saint *Michael*, on the mount *Gargan*, and with a pious,

and feruent desire, visited the Apostles S. *Peter* & S. *Paul* in Rome: in such sort did that vertue and feruour shine in those dayes in many holy persons, but now so weakned is the feruour of Christians touching the visiting of holy places, & the Reliques of our Lord, and his Saintes, that it is almost lost by the continuall warrs of heretikes, and punishment for our sinnes.

Now our Lord began to power out the aboundance of his celestiall graces vpon the roote, that afterwardes the sproutes of farre greater sanctity might follow, and dispersse into the boughes. Neyther would he, that this deuout woman *Hortulana*, should be depriued of the cõsolations, & knowledge of this grace: for being neere

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her child-birth, ſhe one day with great feruour prayed in a Church, before a Crucifix, where ſhe beſought Almighty God to deliuer her from the danger of death in her child-birth, which ſhe much apprehended; & ſhe heard a voice that ſayd: Woman, feare not for thou ſhalt ſafely, and without danger, bring forth a light, that ſhall illuminate, and lighten all the world.

Being thus comforted, and admoniſhed by this diuine anſwere; ſo ſoone as ſhe was deliuered of a daughter, ſhe cauſed her to be called in Baptiſme *Clare*, firmely belieuing that in her ſhould be accompliſhed the ſplendour of the light promiſed, according to the prouidence, and the ordinance of the diuine bounty.

Of the Education, Charity, Prayer, Mortification, and Virginity of S. Clare.

CHAP. II.

SAINT *Clare* being borne into the world, she began incontinently to appeare, and shine as a morning starre in the obscure night of that age, for in the most tender yeares of her first infancy, she already discouered euidēt signs of notable and pious works, wherin she made to appeare her naturall worth, and the graces which God had communicated vnto her: for being naturally of a very delicate constitution, she receiued of her

her Mother the first foundations of faith: afterwards being inspired of God, to apply herselfe to vertuous, and pious workes, she shewed herselfe to be a vessell aptly prepared for diuine grace; and as she abounded in interiour piety, aswell by nature as by grace towardes poore beggars; so according to the small meanes which then she had, she supplyed their necessities. And to the end her Sacrifice might be more pleasing vnto God, the most delicate meates that vvere giuen her, for the nourishment of her little body, she hid, and gaue it secretly to the poore. Thus did pietie augment and increase in her, & nourished charity in her soule, preparing her to receiue the grace & mercy of Almighty God. Her grea-

teſt contentment was in prayer, wherby ſhe was often ſuſteyned, made ioyfull, and comforted as by an Angelicall milke, and in a moſt delicious manner eleuated to the diuine pleaſures of the conuerſation of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. In theſe beginninges, hauing no beades, ſhe vſed inſteed thereof certaine little ſtones, ſome to ſerue for the *Pater noſters*, and others for the *Aues*, and ſo offered her prayers to God. Wherupon beginning to feele the firſt feruours of diuine loue, ſhe iudged that ſhe muſt contemne all tranſitory apparence, & painted flowers of this world: and being by prayer well inſtructed of the holy Ghoſt, ſhe reſolued, as a wiſe ſpirituall Merchant, to haue no more regard of terreſtriall affayrs

fayres, acknowledging them vnworthy to be eſteemed: & with this ſpirit ſhe did weare, as another S. *Cecily*, vnder her gay apparrell, a haire-cloth; ſo exteriourly ſatisfying the world, and interiourly her Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

But hauing attayned the age of marriage, ſhe was importuned by her Father, & other kindred, to chooſe a husband; whereto ſhe would neuer conſent, but vſed lingrings, and delayes, putting off, and differring what ſhe could all humane marriage, & euer recommended to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt her Virginity, with other vertues wherwith ſhe was indued; by ſuch exerciſes indeauouring to pleaſe almighty God, that he might beſtow on her his only Sonne for her

ſpouſe.

ſpouſe. Such were the firſt fruits of her ſpirt, and ſuch the exerciſes of her piety: ſo that being anoynted with ſuch a ſweet, and pretious oyntment, ſhe yielded a moſt pleaſant ſauour, as a cloſet repleniſhed with moſt delightfull liquors, whoſe perfumes, though they be ſhut vp, diſcouer, and manifeſt themſelues; and in ſuch ſort this holy virgin beganne without her knowledge to be commended by her neighbours; the true fame of her ſecret pious workes ſo publiſhing themſelues, that in an inſtant they were exceedingly ſpread abroad, & euery where diuulged.

How

How the virgin S. Clare *had knowledge of the Vertues of the holy Father S.* Francis.

CHAP. III.

THis vertuous Virgin *Clare*, hearing the great fame of the admirable life of Saint *Francis*, who then renewed vnto the world the way of perfection in the same Citty, with a maruelous example of piety and vertue: & considering that many gentlemen did follow him, and that his life was already approued by our holy mother the Church, she exceedingly desired to see, and heare this seruant of God, most worthy, and eminent

minent in all vertues; thereunto inſpired by the ſoueraigne Father of ſpirits, to whome had already byn preſented the firſt fruites of their deuotions, though differently. S. *Francis* hauing byn aduertiſed of this her deſire, and hauing heard the bruit of her vertues, and holy affections, deſired alſo exceedingly to ſee her, and to conferre with her, with intention to fruſtrate the world of ſo noble, and pretious a prey, to preſent her to our ſoueraigne redeemer, to ſerue him in ſome notable enterpriſe, as preordayned of God to deſpoyle the great prince of the world. Neither did his diuine maieſty fayle, to open vnto them both the meanes, to attaine thereunto: he inſpired this vertuous woman to rely vpon

a very honorable & graue matron, that gouerned her in her houſe, as her Mother. And to the end that this holy purpoſe might not be ſiniſterly interpreted of men, and to hinder publike murmure, ſhe went out of her Fathers houſe with this good woman, & found out the holy Father; by the feruour of whoſe pious diſcourſes, ſhe was preſently inflamed with diuine loue, and moued by his holy actions which ſhe admired, as ſeeming vnto her to be more then humane; and therfore ſhe began very exquiſitely to diſpoſe herſelfe to the effecting of the wordes of the holy ſeruant of God; who hauing very louingly intertained her, began to preach vnto her the cõtempt of the world, and by euident reaſon to demonſtrate

ſtrate vnto her, that all the beauty of thinges preſent is but a vanity, filled with falſe, and deceitfull hopes. Then he perſuaded vnto her pure eares, the honourable & amiable Eſpouſall of Ieſus Chriſt, and counſailed her to cõſerue thoſe moſt pretious pearles of virginall purity, for that glorious Spouſe, who out of the loue he bare to the world, being God became man, & would be borne of a virgin.

This holy Father ſollicited this affayre, and played the part of a true Paranymph, & Embaſſadour of the heauenly King. The holy virgin on her ſide beginning already to taſt the ſweetnes of contemplation, and the proofe of the eternall ioyes; the world beginning to ſeeme vnto her vile, and contemptible,

tible, as indeed it is, ſhe as it were melted for the loue of her celeſtiall ſpouſe, whome ſhe already deſired with all her hart. Thēce forth therfore ſhe deſpiſed pretious ſtons Iewells, gold, ſumptuous apparrell, all other worldly trash as filth, and dunge, and abhorring the deteſtable delights of the flesh, she reſolued intierly to dedicate herſelf a liuely témple to Ieſus Chriſt, & to take him for the only ſpouſe of her body and ſoule, and ſo ſubmitting herſelfe wholly, and totally to the counſayles of the glorious father *S. Francis*, him, next after our Lord, ſhe tooke for guid, and director of her life.

How S. Francis drew the virgin S. Clare out of the world, and made her Religious.

CHAP. IIII.

AND to the end the moſt cleare mirrour of her ſoule might not be ſtayned, and blemiſhed vvith the duſt of this world, and that the contagious ſeculer life did not corrupt her innocency, the holy Father prudently indeauoured to ſequeſter this virgin from worldly people. And the ſolemnity of Palme-ſonday approching, the holy Eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt, with a great feruour of ſpirit, repayred to this man of God, and

and moſt inſtantly demaunded of him, when, and how ſhe ſhould make her retyre from the world: wherupon the holy Father ordayned, that on the day of the ſayd feaſt ſhe ſhould goe to the proceſſion of Palmes with the people, decked, and adorned the moſt richly, and gorgiouſly that ſhe could procure, and the night following going out of the Citty, and withall, out of al conuerſation of the world, she should change ſecular pleaſurs into lamentations of the paſſion of our Lord.

Palme-ſonday being come, the glorious S. *Clare* went in the company of her mother, and other Ladyes to the great Church, where there hapned a matter worthy to be recorded, as not done without the

prouidence of the diuine goodnes, which was, that all the other Ladyes going, as is the cuſtome of Italy, to take holy Palme, and S. *Clare*, out of a virginall bashfulnes, remayning alone without mouing out of her place, the Biſhop deſcended frō the ſteps of his ſeate, & put into her hand a branch of Palme.

The night approaching ſhe began to prepare herſelfe for effecting the commaundment of the holy Father, and to make a glorious flight, and honorable retyre from the world, in honeſt company. But it ſeeming to her impoſſible to goe forth at the ordinary, and chiefeſt doore of the houſe, ſhe bethought herſelfe to take the benefit of a backe doore, which (though it were dammed, and cloſed vp with groſſe

groſſe ſtones, and mighty blocks) ſhe with an admirable courage, & force rather of a ſtrong man, then of a tender yong woman, herſelfe broke open. Thus then leauing her Fathers houſe, her Citty, kindred, and friendes, ſhe with extraordinary ſpeed arriued at the Church of our Lady of Angels, where the Religious, that in the houſe of God were imployed in pious watchings, receiued, with burning wax lights in their handes, this holy virgin, that ſought her ſpouſe, and redeemer Ieſus Chriſt with a lampe not extinct, and empty, but filled with diuine loue: and incontinently in the ſelfe-ſame houre and place, hauing left, and abandoned the impurityes of Babylon, ſhe gaue the world the ticket of defiance,

and vtter adieu before the Altar of the ſoueraigne Queene of Angells; where the glorious Father S. *Francis*, inſpired of God, & neglecting all other worldly reſpects, cut off her hayre: then he cloathed her with a poore habit of the order, cõmanding the Iewels, & gorgeous attire which ſhe brought, to be giuen to the poore of Ieſus Chriſt. It had not beene indeed conuenient, that the new Order of floriſhing virginity towardes the end of the world, ſhould otherwiſe begin, then in the Angelical pallace of that moſt Immaculate Queene, who before had alone byn a mother, and a virgin, and conſequently more worthy then all others vvhatſoeuer.

In the very ſame place had the noble

noble Chiualry of the poore of Ie-ſus Chriſt, the Friars Minors, their beginninge, vnder the valourous Captaine S. *Francis*, to the end it might euidently appeare, that the Mother of God in this her habita-tion ingendred, and produced the one and the other Religion. And ſo ſoone as this new Eſpouſe had re-ceiued the habit, & enſignes of ho-ly pēnance, before the Aultar of the moſt ſacred virgin Mary, the hūble ſeruāt was accepted by Ieſus Chriſt for his Eſpouſe, and the glorious Father S. *Francis* conducted her to the monaſtery of S. *Paul* in Aſſiſi-um, where were Religious womē of the order of S. *Benuet*: there to remaine till almighty God had pro-uided another monaſtery.

How much the kindred of S. Clare *laboured to retire her from Religion: and how she was conducted to* S. Damian.

CHAP. V.

THE kindred of this holy virgin vnderstanding what she had done, and the bruit of her resolution being diuulged ouer all the Citty, many of the friendes of her Father and Mother assembled, and consulted to preuent this vertuous virgin of her holy resolution; and coming to the monastery of the Religious of Saint *Bennet*, whither she was retired, they purposed to execute by

by violence, what they could not compaſſe by humane policy, trying their forces againſt the meeke lambe of Ieſus Chriſt, and by their malice & peruerſe counſell ſeeking to delude that ſimple doue; thē did they make her deceiptful promiſes, exhorting her to retire herſelfe frō ſuch baſe condition, and abiection, demonſtrating vnto her, that it was a matter vnworthy her noble deſcent, and that the like neuer happened in the Citty. But the virgin firme and ſtable in Ieſus Chriſt, approaching to the Altar, diſcouered her haireleſſe head, alleadging, that ſhe could no more be ſeparated frō the ſeruice of Ieſus Chriſt, for whoſe loue ſhe had already forſaken all the world, & themſelues alſo: and the more they tormented

her, the more was her hart inflamed in the loue of God, and of her ſweet ſpouſe Ieſus Chriſt, who ſupplyed her with new forces to reſiſt. Thus for many dayes togeather diſturbed with many iniuries, ſhe indured great contradictions in the way of God: and albeit her kindred perſeuered in their attempts to withdraw her from her pious deſigne, her feruour yet did neuer wax cold, nor her hart feble: but on the contrary, ſo many iniurious wordes, and violent threats did ſo much confirme her confidence in God, that her kindred were conſtrayned to forbeare any more to vexe, and diſquiet her, retyring themſelues as all aſhamed, & confounded. Thus did almighty God make appeare, how much

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the power of thoſe that are his, though of themſelues feeble, did exceed the ſtrong, and puiſſant of the world.

But in regard that her ſoule had not perfect repoſe in that place, ſhe was by the holy Father S. *Francis* placed in the church of S. *Damian*, and there, as in a ſecret harbour and ſecure, ſhe caſt the anker of her ſoule neuer changing place, nether in reſpect of the great reſtraint therof, nor for feare of ſolitude, this Church being without the Citty. This was the Church in reparatiō wherof the Glorious S. *Francis* laboured in the beginning of his conuerſion: and where he did alſo offer money to the Chaplaine to repayre it: this holy Father being once alſo in this Church, and praying

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ing with aboundance of tears, merited to heare the voyce of the crucifix, before which he was, that thrice reiterated vnto him : Goe Francis, and repayre my houſe, which, as thou ſeeſt, is ready to fall. The glorious virgin *Clare*, for the loue of her heauenly ſpouſe, ſhut herſelfe vp in that little place, and there impriſoned herſelfe during her life, ſequeſtring her body
n the turbulent tempeſt of the
orld. This ſiluered Doue there building her neſt in the concauities of that Church, ingendred the colledge of virgins of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, & there inſtituting a holy conuent, gaue a beginning to the order of poore Religious women. And thus being ſetled in the way of pennance, ſhe bruized the hard
turfes

turfes of her members, with the coulter of the Croſſe, and perfectly ſowed the ſeede of ſanctity and iuſtice, making with her very foule ſtepps and traces of vertuous progreſſe, for them that were to followv her.

How the virgin Agnes, *ſiſter to* S. Clare, *was by her feruent prayers conuerted: and of the perſecutions she indured by her kindred; and how she was miraculouſly freed of them.*

CHAP. VI.

SAINT *Clare* had a younger ſiſter, who both in regard of bloud & of pouerty, was really her

her ſiſter; and ſhe exceedingly deſiring the conuerſion of this young virgin, neuer failed in her moſt feruent deuotions, which in her firſt dayes ſhe offered to almighty God, as feruently & deuoutly as she poſſibly could, with a perfect zeale, to beſeech him, that as ſhe had liued with her ſiſter in the world, there might be alſo betweene them an holy vnion of body, & will, in his ſeruice; moſt inſtantly importuning him to make it appeare to her ſiſter, whome she had left in her mothers houſe, what a notorious deluder the world is, & how ful of diſcontenment: & on the contrary how ſweet, and pleaſant is Ieſus Chriſt; and that conſequently he would pleaſe to change her deſired reſolution of carnall marriage, and cauſe

cauſe her to imbrace the vnion of diuine loue, and to take for her ſpouſe the King of glory. Now in regard that our Lord had already ſetled ſuch an amity betweene theſe two ſiſters, that their ſeparation was afflictiue & troubleſome vnto them, (though then their deſires & willes were farre different) he made no delay to fauour this his poore ſuppliant, and deuout ſeruant, euen in this her firſt petition, which she ſo inſtantly required of him, and which his diuine maieſty ſo readily graunted.

Sixteene dayes then after her conuerſion, her ſiſter *Agnes* inſpired of God, with a ſtrong and prompt reſolution gaue a ſlip, and farewell to the world, & came to her ſiſter *Clare*, to whō diſcouering the

the ſecrets of her hart, ſhe ſaid ſhe was reſolued to ſerue God in her company: which the glorious *Clare* vnderſtanding, ſhe moſt amiably imbraced her, and with a very ioyfull & contented countenance ſaid: my moſt deare Siſter, I giue infinite thankes to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that it hath pleaſed him to heare me, and deliuer me from the affliction I endured for your ſake. This noble conuerſion of *Agnes*, by the prayers of her ſiſter *Clare*, was ſeconded by as many contradictions of her kindred, as that of S. *Clare*: but theſe bleſſed ſiſters ſeruing our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and imitating his ſtepps, ſhe that had moſt taſt of God, and was in higher progreſſe, inſtructed her ſiſter Nouice. Their kindred knowing that *Agnes* was

with

with her sister *Clare*, twelue men of their neerest bloud, as Brothers, vncles, and cosen germanes assembled to assault them, and to combat the Espouses of Iesus Christ. The day following then, with an extreme rage and fury they came to those holy virgins, yet at their first cõming dissembling their lewd intention, they shewed them some fauorable countenance: then addressing themselues to the virgin *Agnes*, despayring of all hope to withdraw S. *Clare* from her holy purpose, they demaunded of her, wherfore she was retyred into that place? thẽ willed her to deliberate, and resolue to retourne with them to her Fathers house: whereto she answered, that she was resolued, (the grace of God assisting her)

to remayne with her ſiſter: which anſwere one of them diſdayning, full of paſſion, and tranſported with choler, took her by the haire, and gaue her many blowes with his feet and fiſtes; then vſed all his force to pull her out of the place, which at length by the help of others he performed: for taking her in their armes, they forcibly trayled her out.

But this little daughter of Ieſus Chriſt, ſeing herſelfe violently wreſted by thoſe furious lyons out the armes of her God, ſhe began to cry to her ſiſter, Help me ſiſter, & permit me not to be ſeparated frō our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and your louing company. Her carnall kindred trayled a long the valley this virgin of Ieſus Chriſt agaynſt her will,

will, and in despight of her feeble, though couragious resistance, renting her cloathes from her tender body. In the meane while S. *Clare*, vnable by other meanes to relieue her sister, had recourse to prayer, with aboundance of teares, beseeching God to vouchsafe to giue a couragious confidence, to her sister, that his diuine fauour defending his faythfull seruant, humane forces might be ouercome: and our Lord heard her. For at the instant of her prayer, the body of the virgin *Agnes* miraculously became so weighty, that her kindred were at length inforced to leaue her on the ground: and albeit so many men, and their seruantes, put all their forces to lift her vp, yet could they neuer doe it, but called labou-

rers, and workemen of the vineyards that wrought therabouts to assist them, yet their great number no more auayled then the lesse.

Finally the forces fayling of her kindred, and those that attempted to assist them, they acknowledged the miracle, though scornefully, saying: it is no maruayle though she be so weighty, hauing layne all night as lead. Whereupon *Signor Monaldo* her vncle in extreme passion lifting vp his armes to strike her, he presently felt an extreme payne therein, which did not only torment him for the present, but a long tyme after. Then S. *Clare* after her prayer, ariuing, besought her kindred to forbeare in vaine to contend with God, and to leaue her the care of her sister,

who

who lay as halfe dead. They perceiuing their labour loſt to hinder their pious reſolution, being exceedingly vvearyed, left the two ſiſters togeather. The troup then being departed, the tormented *Agnes* aroſe from the ground, full of ioy in Ieſus Chriſt, for whoſe loue ſhe had fought, & ouercome in this her firſt conflict againſt the world, and his prince the Diuell, by fauour and aſſiſtance of diuine grace; & her ſiſter aſking her how ſhe felt herſelfe, ſhe anſwered, that notwithſtanding all the affliction they had procured her by buffets, beatings, ſpurnes with their feet & fiſtes, tearing her by the hayre, trayling her through ſtony wayes, ſhe had felt in a manner nothing, eſpecially by the ver-

tue, and force of diuine grace, and next by the merits of her good prayers. Shortly after the holy Father S. *Francis* cut of her haire, ſhe retayning ſtill her proper name of *Agnes*, in memory of the innocent lambe Ieſus Chriſt, who offering himſelfe in ſacrifice to his Father, gaue reſiſtance to the world, fought valerouſly, and ouercame: and ſo the holy Father inſtructed her with her ſiſter, and taught her the way of God in ſuch ſort, that ſhe ſo increaſed, and profited in Religion, & all vertue, and ſanctity, that ſhe was an admiration to al the world.

of

Of the humility of the Virgin Saint Clare.

CHAP. VII.

PROFOVND humility was the firſt aſſured ſtone, & foundation, which the holy virgin layd in the beginning of her Relion, after ſhe had begun to labour in the way of God, ſo to aduance, and ſet forward the building of all other vertues. She vowed Obedience vnto S. *Francis*, which vow in all her life, ſhe neuer tranſgreſſed, and for three yeares after her conuerſion, ſhe deſired rather with great humility to be ſubiect, then a Superior, ſhúning the title, & office

of Abbeſſe, taking more content to ſerue among the ſeruants of Ieſus Chriſt, then to be ſerued. But being at length by the holy Father S. *Francis* thereunto conſtrained, ſhe vndertooke the gouernment of the Religious, which bred in her hart more feare, then preſumption: ſo that ſhe rather continued, and became a ſeruant, then free from ſubiection. For the more ſhe ſeemed to be rayſed to the office, and title of dignity, the more did ſhe repute herſelfe vile, and the more ſhewed herſelfe ready to ſerue, and made herſelfe more contemptible then all her religious, both in habit and baſe ſeruice. She diſdayned not to doe the office of ſeruants, giuing water to the Religious to waſh, whom ſhe made often to ſit, herſelf ſtanding.

ſtanding, and ſeruing them at table.

When ſhe commaunded any thing, it was vnwillingly, rather deſiring to do, then to commaund others. She performed to the ſicke all kind of ſeruices, were they neuer ſo loathſome, as to make cleane any thing that was defiled or foule, ſhunning with ſo worthy a ſpirit al pleaſant, and delightfull actions, neuer abhorring, or deſdayning the moſt offenſiue ſmells. She often waſhed the feete of the lay ſiſters, whē they came from abroad, made them cleane, and with great humility kiſſed them. It one time chaunced, that waſhing the feete of a ſeruant, and offering to kiſſe them, the ſeruant vnwilling to permit ſuch humility, pulled away her

foote to auoid it, but she did it so rudely, that she gaue the holy virgin a dash on the face: yet so farre was this Saint from being offended therewith, that on the contrary she mildly tooke the foote of the seruant againe, and kissed the sole therof. Thus did this true espouse of God accomplish the doctrine of Iesus Christ, & the example which he left, when he washed the feete of his Apostles.

Of

Of the voluntary pouerty of the Virgin S. Clare, *and of her zeale to that holy vertue.*

CHAP. VIII.

THis holy virgin made an vnion & correſpondence betweene her pouerty in all externall thinges, and her holy pouerty of ſpirit; and firſt at the beginning of her conuerſion ſhe made ſale of her patrimony, and birth-right, all which diſtributing vnto the poore of Ieſus Chriſt, ſhe reſerued nothing to herſelfe. Hauing ſo abandoned all the world exterioutly, and inriched her ſoule inte-

interiourly, freed from the burthen of worldly affayres, she ran farre more lightly after Iesus Christ, and thereby contracted such an inuiolable amity with holy pouerty, that she would haue possession of no other thing then her glorious spouse Iesus Christ, nor would she permit her spirituall daughters to possesse any thing els. And with this Euãgelical traffique, she purchased the most pretious pearle of celestiall desire, in place of all the other thinges, which she had sold, acknowledging, that the same could in no sort be inioyed togeather with the distraction, and occupation of temporall things.

Giuing instructions to her Religious, she would sometimes say vnto them, that this their compa-

ny

ny ſhould be then grateful to God, and become very rich in pouerty, and ſhould by ſuch meanes conſerue it ſelfe firme and ſtable, if it were alwayes fortifyed, and enuironed with the rampiers & ſtrong bulwarkes of pouerty. She alſo admoniſhed her beloued daughters in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, to conforme themſelues to him, lying poore in the bed of pouerty, who was no ſooner borne, but was by the moſt ſacred virgin his Mother layd in a ſtraite Cribbe.

Now deſiring to call her Rule by the tytle of Pouerty, ſhe demaunded of Pope Innocent the fourth the priuiledge of Pouerty, who as a magnanimous Prelate reioycing at the great feruour of this holy virgin, exceedingly commended

ded this her deuotion, assuring himselfe that the like priuiledge had neuer byn demaunded of the Apostolike sea. And to the end a new & extraordinary fauor might answere this new and vnacustomed demaund, the holy Pope with an exceeding contentment vvrote with his owne hand the first Patent of the priuiledge; which Pope Gregory the ninth his predecessor of holy memory had also done, who with a Fatherly affection louing this Espouse of Iesus Christ, once gaue her counsayle, in consideration of diuers alterations of matters, and the strange euents of tymes, yea and in regard of the perills of future ages, to be content that her Order might haue some possessions, himselfe offering to bestow

beſtow it vpon them: but ſhe courragiouſly withſtood it, and as a true, poore, and legitimate daughter of the holy Patriarch poore S. *Francis*, would neuer accord thereunto.

The Pope alleadging, that if ſhe feared the breach of her vow, he would abſolue her theerof: but this virgin anſwered very humbly in this manner. Holy Father I ſhall be very ioyfull, if it pleaſe your Holynes to abſolue me of all my ſinnes, but to free me from performing the Counſayles of God, I will accept no abſolution. This holy virgin with an exceeding ioy receiued the morſels of bread which the Religious brought from begging, and had gotten for the loue of God: but ſhe was much troubled,

bled, when she saw whole loaues; labouring much to conforme herselfe in all things to perfect pouerty with him, who was poorly and nakedly Crucified: & in such sort, that no transitory thing might at any tyme separate the most poore virgin from her beloued, nor hinder her from her most ardent feruour to follow our Lord Iesus Christ.

Of the miracles of the pouerty of the glorious S. Clare.

CHAP. IX.

IT hapned one day that the glorious virgin S. *Clare* knew, that there was but one loafe of bread in her Couent, and so the houre of

of dinner being come, she called the sister that was the Despensier, and willed her to cut the loafe she had in her custody in two, and to send the one halfe to the Religious that were without, and to keep the other for themselues, vvhereof she should make fifty portions, there being so many Religious, & then should set it vpon the table of pouerty: whereunto the Despensier answered, that the miracles of Iesus Christ were needfull to make so many portions of so small quantity of bread: but S. *Clare* replyed, saying, Daughter doe only what I doe comaund thee.

The sister went presently to effect the commaundmēt of her Abbesse, who in the meane while together with all the other Religi-

ous applyed themselues to prayer, presenting their deuotions, & teares to their spouse Iesus Christ, and instantly by his infinit bounty the little morsells of bread so augmented in the handes of the Despensier that they sufficed to feed al the Religious.

It hapned another tyme that the seruantes of Iesus Christ wanted oyle, so that they had not sufficient to dresse meate for the sicke. S. *Clare* being aduertised of this necessity tooke a pot, which (as mistris of humility) she washed with her owne handes, then sent it to the turne wheele, that a Religious man there might take it, to go, and demaúd oyle for the loue of God. Hauing to this effect caused a Religious mã to be called to send him, (as matters

matters doe not ſucceed as men propoſe, but according to the pleaſure of the diuine, and mercifull prouidence) S. *Clare* hauing recommended this neceſſity to Almighty God, the ſayd Religious found the pot full of pure oyle; which perceiuing he thought the Religious within had required it without need; & with a kind of murmure he ſayd: I know not why the ſiſters haue called me, their pot being ful of oyle: ſo that the miracle was diſcouered. Almighty God did often alſo by extraordinary means ſupply the neceſſityes of his poore ſeruants by the meritorious prayers of S. *Clare*.

Of the austere mortifications, abstinences, and fasts of S. Clare.

CHAP. X.

I Doubt whether it be not more expedient to conceale, then to diuulge the admirable affliction, and rude pennance of S. *Clare*, becauſe this holy virgin hath performed ſuch extreme mortifications, that many, who ſhall reade them, acknowledging themſelues cowardes, and ouercome in this conflict, (as we are all) and put into admiration of theſe marueylous actes, will perhapps call in queſtion her proweſſe, which is to oppugne the very truth. Is it not a great matter, that vſing one only

ly habit, all patched, and a poore cloake of the groſſeſt cloath, ſhe rather couered her body, then defended it from the importunityes of the ſeaſons? But it is more admirable, that ſhe neuer wore ſtockings, ſhooes, nor any other things on her feete after ſhe became Religious. It was alſo a ſtrange matter that ſhe faſted daily, and neuer fayled for whatſoeuer occaſion that hapned. She neuer lay vpon mattreſſe, though that were no ſinguler prayſe vnto her, all her Religious doing the like.

This eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt wore more then the reſt, a hayre-cloath as great as halfe a tunicke, made of hogges haire, the haire being halfe ſhorne, next her fleſh. She alſo wore a hayre-cloath, which a Religious

very importunatly once borrowed of her, but prouing it to be so rude, and sharpe, she restored it three dayes after to S. *Clare* more readily, then she had ioyfully borrowed it. Her ordinary bed was the bare ground, except somtymes she slept vpon dry branches or twigges, vsing for a pillow a blocke of wood. But in regard that the rigorous life, wherwith she afflicted her body, brought her to sicknes, the holy Father S. *Francis* commanded her to lye vpon chaffe. The rigour of her abstinence in her fastes was such, that she could not maintaine her body in life, so little did she eate; wherby it is easy to iudge that she was susteyned by diuine vertue.

When she had her health, she fasted

faſted all the Aduent, and Lent, & from all Saints to Chriſtmas with bread and water, the ſondayes excepted: and which is more admirable, three dayes of the weeke, monday, wedneſday, and friday in the Lent, ſhe did eate nothing at all: ſo that the commaundment of faſt, and the rigour of her voluntary mortification, ſeemed to haue a contrariety ech with other, becauſe vpon the eue of a commaunded feaſt, ſhe vſed but bread & water: neyther muſt it be admired, if ſuch a rigour of ſo long continuance bred many infirmityes in this holy virgin, vvhich vvaſted her forces, and ouerthrew all the naturall ſtrength and health of her body.

The deuout Religious daugh-

ters of this holy mother had exceeding compassion of her, and they bitterly lamented the voluntary procuring of her owne death: for remedy wherof, S *Francis*, & the Bishop of Assisiū forbad her those three dayes of fast, which euery weeke she vsually inflicted vpon herselfe, and commaunded her not to passe one day without taking at least an once and a halfe of bread, to conserue her life. And albeit such grieuous afflictions of the body doe accustome to breed also some affliction to the hart, yet did the contrary succeed in her: for she carryed a countenance so gratious and ioyfull in all her austerities, that she seemed eyther to haue no feeling of them, or not to feare any inconuenience thereof: yea she

in

in a ſort made light of corporall afflictiõs: which ſufficiẽtly demõſtrated, that the ſpirituall ioy, wherwith ſhe was interiouly nouriſhed, appeared exteriourly in her holy face, becauſe the true loue of the hart maketh always corporall afflictions eaſy and light.

Of the deuotion, and ſpirituall profit, which the fame of the Glorious S. Clare *procured ouer all the world.*

CHAP. XI.

THE fame of S. *Clare* began within little tyme to ſpread ouer all Italy, which cauſed women from all partes to begin to

run after the odour of the pretious liquour of her Sanctity. The Virgins after her example approached vnto Ieſus Chriſt, and made him preſents of their virginity: marryed vvomen endeauoured to liue more chaſt and vertuouſly: gentlewomen and Ladyes, contemning their fayre houſes, and ſumptuous tables, ſhut themſelues into monaſteries, eſteeming it a great glory to liue in ſtrict pennance for the loue of Ieſus Chriſt. This Saint was alſo a ſpur vnto men to excite in them a violent feruent, and principally to youth, that began to take courage in the contempt of the world, & by exãple of the frayler ſexe, to fight agaynſt the temptations, and deceiptfull pleaſures of the flesh. Many marryed perſons

with

with mutuall consent obliged themselues to continency, the men entering into couents of men, & the women into monasteries of Religious women. The mother induced the daughter to serue Iesus Christ, the daughter the mother, one sister another, & briefly ech one by a holy enuy desired to serue Iesus Christ, all of them seeking to participate of the euangelicall life, which by this Espouse of Iesus Christ vvas demonstrated vnto them.

An infinite nũber of virgins, that by her fame were induced to piety, vnable to become Religious, or to leaue their fathers houses, indeauored yet to liue there more religiously, leading a regular life without rule. S. *Clare* by her exãple produced

ced ſuch & ſo many brāches of ſal-uation, that it ſeemed the ſaying of the Prophet was to be accompli-ſhed in her: The fruits of the deſo-late, and barren are farre greater, then of the marryed. Whiles theſe matters thus proceeded in Italy, the deſcent of this benediction, which diſtilled downe in the valley of Spoletum, grew by diuine pro-uidence to ſo ſpatious and large a flood, that the violent current ther-of ouerflowed al the Cittyes of the holy Church, ſo that the nouelty of ſuch admirable things, was ſpee-dily diulged ouer all the world, & with ſuch prayſe, and admiration gaue ſuch ſplendour, that the na-ture of her vertues filled the cham-bers of great Ladies with beames of vnſpeakable charity, and penetra-

ted

ted euen into the chambers of great Dutcheſſes; yea thoſe moſt pure beames of her brightnes pierced into the very cabinetts of Queenes, and Princeſſes; and that in ſuch ſort, that eminency of bloud, and height of nobility ſubmitted, and debaſed it ſelfe to follow the ſtepps of this glorious virgin, many reiecting the greatnes of their honour, and the ſublimity of their eſtates; ſo that ſome Ladyes, who could haue byn marryed to Kings and Dukes, induced by the fame of S. *Clare*, tooke vpon them the practiſe of ſtrict pennance, and many already marryed to men of great nobility, deſired in their eſtate to imitate this ſeruant of Ieſus Chriſt.

An infinit number alſo of Cities

were

were by this exãple adorned with monasteries of young women: the fieldes, and mountaynes were enriched and inobled with the structures of these celestiall buildings; The exercise and honour of chastity did multiply in the world, S. *Clare* carrying the stãdard of the order of virgins, which being then almost extinguished, she restored to perfection, renewing it by the blessed flowres of her example & conuersation. But returning to the history, let vs speake of the perfection of the prayer of this glorious virgin, by meanes wherof she obteyned of God so great graces for her selfe, and her daughters.

Of

Of the feruent and perfect prayer of the virgin S. Clare.

CHAP. XII.

AS Saint *Clare* was mortifyed in her flesh, and farre more from all corporall recreations, so did she cõtinually busy herselfe in deuotions, and diuine prayses. This virgin had fixed, & imprinted the subtility of her feruent desire in the eternall light, and as she was remote from earthly occupations, and rumors, so did she the more largely dilate the bosome of her soule to the influence of diuine grace. She continued in long prayer together with her religious after Complin, the riuers of teares

that

that flowed from her eyes awaking and bathing the harts of her companions: when the sleep of others gaue her opportunity to be solitary, being often in prayer, she wold lay her face agaynst the earth bathed with teares, kissing it sweetly, and with such contentment, that she seemed alwayes to hold in her armes her spouse Iesus Christ, at vvhose feete her teares trickled downe, and her kisses left their impressions.

It hapned one time, that as this holy virgin powred out her teares in the silence of the night, the Angel of darknes appeared vnto her in figure of a blacke young man, saying, If thou continuest this extreme weeping thou wilt become blynd, wherto she answered, he that is to

see

ſee God, cannot be blynd: wherwith the diuell being confounded vaniſhed & fled. The ſame night this Saint being in prayer after Mattines, all bathed in teares, the Tẽpter appeared againe vnto her, and ſayd, Weepe not ſo much, vnles thou wilt haue thy braynes to melt, and diſtill in ſuch ſort, that thou ſhalt auoyd them at thy eyes and noſtrels, & therwith ſhall thy noſe be croked. S. *Clare* with great feruour anſwered him, ſaying, He that ſerueth Ieſus Chriſt can haue no crookednes, and preſently the wicked ſpirit diſappeared.

Many ſignes did diſcouer, and make knowne the great alteration ſhe receiued in herſelfe, in feruour of her prayer, & how ſweet & delectable the diuine bounty was vnto

her in this ioy & holy conuerſation: for when ſhe returned from prayer, ſhe with admirable contentmēt brought words inflamed with the fire of the altar of God, which kindled the harts of her Religious, and procured in them a great admiration at this extreme ſweetnes that appeared from of her face. It is without doubt, that Almighty God had coupled, & conioyned his ſweetnes with her pouerty, and did manifeſt exteriorly in her ſoule what was interiourly repleniſhed with diuine light. In this manner did ſhe ordinarily liue full of ſupreme delights, paſſing ouer this deceiptfull world with her noble ſpouſe Ieſus Chriſt, and being placed vpon this wheele of motion, ſhe was theron ſuſteyned with an

aſſu-

assurance, and firmity of vertue, very stable: and preserued with the celestiall eleuation of her soule in the height of heauē, keeping the treasure of glory securely shut vp within a vessel of flesh heere below vpon earth.

This holy virgin accustomed to call vp the yonger Religious a little before Mattines, & to awaken them with the ordinary signe, to excite them very often to prayse God. All her Religious sleeping, she did watch, lighted the lampe, and rung at mattins, so that negligence found no entrance into her monastery: nor sloath had there any place. She also by the sting of sharpe reprehension, and of her liuely and effectuall examples, expelled tepidity, and irkesomnes

in prayer, and the ſeruice of God.

How the Mores were expelled the Monaſtery by the prayers of Saint Clare.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS being the place, where we ſhould record the miracles of this holy virgin, it is not conueuient that we pretermit them in ſilence; for as the marueilous effects of her prayers were veritable, ſo alſo are they worthy of honour and reuerence. In the time of the Emperour Federike the ſecond, the holy Church in diuers places indured great perſecutions, but particulerly in the valley of Spoletū, which being ſubiect to the Roman

Roman Church, dranke of the veſſel of wrath by this miſcheuous tyrant, his Captaynes and ſouldiers being ſcattered ouer the feildes as graſſe hoppers with ſword to murther people, and with fire to burne their houſes. The impiety of this Emperour did ſo augment, that he had aſſembled all the Mores that dwelt vpon the mountaines, and amongſt the deſerts, to make himſelfe the more fearefull to his vaſſells: & after he had by large promiſes gayned theſe Mores, and diſpoſed of them in diuers places, he gaue them at length for retire a very auncient, but ruinated Citty, which yet to this preſent is called *Mourades Mores*, which they fortified, and then thither retyred about twenty thouſand fighting mē,

who did much mischiefe ouer all Apulia, and in other Christian places.

These enemyes of the faith of Iesus Christ came one day vnexpectedly towards the Citty of Assisium, who being already close at the gates, a great number of them came to the monastery of S. *Damian*, as a lewd and disloyall nation, that continually thirsteth after the bloud of Christians, and dareth to commit villanously all kind of execrable actes, without eyther shame of men, or feare of God. These Mores then brake euen into the monastery of S. *Clare*, where she was with her Religious daughters, who had their harts surprised with an extreme terror; but much more, whē they heard the barking and

and cry of thoſe dogges ſo neere them, ſo that they were euen dying with the apprehenſion, not knowing where to ſeeke reliefe, nor of whome to hope for deliuerance frō ſo eminent peril, but only by the merits of their holy Mother, whome with infinit ſighes & teares they aduertiſed of what they heard and ſaw.

This holy virgin (though ſicke) incouraged her Religious, & cauſed herſelfe with incredible conſtancy to be carryed to the gate of her monaſtery, at the entry whereof, in ſight of all her enemies, ſhe with great reuerence placed the moſt bleſſed Sacrament of the Euchariſt in the Pix, before which falling proſtrate vpon the earth, ſhe with abounndance of teares thus

ſpake to her beloued ſpouſe Ieſus Chriſt: Is it poſſible (my God,) thy will ſhould be, that theſe thy ſeruants, who cannot vſe materiall weapons to defend themſelues, & whome I haue heere brought vp, and nourſed in thy holy loue, ſhould now be deliuered into the power of the infidell Mores? O my God preſerue them if thou pleaſe, and me likewiſe; for albeit thy diuine maieſty hath committed them to my gouernement, yet it is not in my power to defend them from ſo great a perill, ſith this protection cannot be, but by a worke of thine omnipotency: therfore doe I recommend them to thy diuine maieſty with al the affection that I am able.

As ſoone as this holy virgin had ſent

ſent theſe prayers vnto heauen, ſhe heard a voice ſo delicate, as if it had bin of a ſucking child that ſaid, I wil protect you for euer. The holy mother did not yet giue ouer to preſẽt her prayers ſaying: my God I humbly beſeech thee, if ſo it be thy holy will, to preſerue, and defend this thy Citty of Aſſiſium which doth nouriſh vs for the loue it beareth to thy diuine maieſty. Wherto God anſwered, this Citty ſhall ſuffer much, but in the end I will by my fauour defend it. Saint *Clare* hauing heard ſo gratious newes, lifted vp her face bathed with teares and comforted her beloued daughters, ſaying: Deare ſiſters, I aſſure you that no euill ſhall befall you, only be carefull to haue a firme faith, and confidence

in Ieſus Chriſt. The diuine aſſiſtãce making no long delay, for the preſumption and rage of the Mores was in continently cooled, ſo that a ſuddaine vnknowne terrour hauing ſurpriſed them, they ſpeedily retyred ouer the walles, which they had ſcaled, to enter. They being thus by the vertue of the prayers of Saint *Clare* expelled, ſhe priuately called the Religious, that had heard the ſaid voice of God, and commaunded them, that howſoeuer it were, they ſhould not diuulge what they had heard during her life.

How

How the Citty of Aßiſiũ was at another tyme deliuered by the prayers of this holy virgin.

CHAP. XIIII.

VPON another time, one of the principall Captaynes of the Emperour Frederike called *Vitalis Auerſa*, a man very ambitious of glory, full of courage, and a notable Captaine, conducted his troupes to beſiege Aſſiſium, & hauing inuironed it, he propoſed to waſt, & ſpoile the plaine Countrey thereabout, making a totall ruine to the very trees which were hewed downe; and then laying his ſeige, he vttered menacing and

and vaunting oathes, that he wold not ſtirre thence, till he had giuen the Citty a victorious aſſault: and this ſiege ſo long continued, that the beſeiged began to looſe courage, as wanting many thinges extremely needfull vnto thē? wherof the ſeruāt of Ieſus Chriſt being aduertiſed, ſighing in her hart, ſhe called all her Religious, to whom ſhe thus diſcourſed: My deare ſiſters, know that all our neceſſities haue euer bin ſupplied by the charity of this Citty, ſo that we ſhould be very vngratefull, if we ſhould not according to our ability aſſiſt them in this extreme neceſſity: then ſhe commanded to be brought her aſhes, and all her Religious to diſcoife their heades: and to giue them example, ſhe began to couer her

bare

bare head with aſhes, wherin all the other Religious following her, ſhe ſaid: goe yee to our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and with the greateſt humility, and moſt feruent prayers that you can poſſible, demaund of him the deliuerance of your Citty.

It cánot be expreſſed, with what feruour and teares theſe deuout Virgins inceſſantly offered their prayers, vnto God the ſpace of one entiere day and night, demaunding mercy in behalfe of the ſaid Citty beſeiged by their enemies. Theſe prayers and teares were of ſuch force and vertue, that the omnipotent bounty and mercy had compaſſion of them, and from the day following ſent them his puiſſant hand, and aſſiſtance in ſuch ſort,

ſort, that the enemies campe was defeated, & the Captaine conſtrained ſhamfully, & in deſpight of his forces, without ſound trompet to raiſe his ſeige: for he fled without euer troubling the Aſſiſians, being ſhortly after ſlaine.

Of the Reuerence & deuotion which S. Clare *had to the moſt bleſſed Sacrament: and of the vertue of her prayers agaynſt the Diuells.*

CHAP. XV.

THE deuotion of Saint *Clare* towardes the moſt Holy Sacrament of the Altar was ſuch, that ſhe made it apparent in many

many of her actions: for though ſhe were moſt grieuouſly ſicke in her bed, yet would ſhe ſo diſpoſe herſelfe therin, & be ſo propped, and ſtayed vp, that ſhe might conueniently ſpinne, an exerciſe which ſhe exceedingly affected, & wherin ſhe wholy imployed herſelfe: doing it ſo delicately, that with the threed of her labour ſhe cauſed to be wouen very curious, and fine cloath, which ſhe imployed in furniture for the Altar. She one time got made 50. Corporalls, which ſhe ſent in caſes of ſilke to many Churches of the valley of Spoletum. When ſhe was to receiue the moſt Bleſſed Sacrament, before ſhe preſented herſelfe therunto, ſhe was alwayes bathed in teares, and ſo with exceeding feare

approaching, she did reuerence him that was preſent in the Sacrament, as acknowledging him to be the ſame that gouerneth heauen & earth; therfore did the Diuells ſo much feare the prayers of the Eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt, S. *Clare*, as they haue ſuudry times declared.

A very deuout womā of the Biſhopricke of Piſa came to the monaſtery of S. *Damian*, to thanke God and his ſeruant S. *Clare*, for hauing bin by her merits deliuered of fiue diuells that poſſeſſed her, which in going out of her body, confeſſed that the prayers of S. *Clare* did burne them, and to their great confuſion expelled them out of the humane bodies which they poſſeſſed.

Of

Of a meruaylous conſolation which S. Clare *receiued vpon the feaſt of the moſt holy Natiuity.*

CHAP. XVI.

AS the glorious S. *Clare* was alwayes in her ſicknes with a liuely memory myndfull of her beloued Ieſus: ſo was ſhe correſpondently viſited by him in all her neceſſities. Once in the night of the Natiuity, when all the world and Angells did ſo ſolemnely feaſt for the birth of our Redeemer, all the Religious went to the quier to Mattines, and left their mother accompanyed only with her grieuous infirmity: wher-

fore hauing begun to meditate vpon the great miſtery of that night, and lamenting exceedingly, that ſhe could not aſſiſt at the diuine ſeruice, ſhe ſighing ſayd: O my God, thou ſeeſt how I remaine here alone; and ending this, ſhe began to heare the Mattines that were ſung in the Church of Saint *Francis* in Aſſiſium, very diſtinctly vnderſtanding the voice of the Religious; and the very ſound of the Organs: yet was ſhe not ſo neare the ſaid Church, as ſhe might humanly heare what was ſung there; but it muſt neceſſarily be concluded, that this was miraculouſly done in one of theſe two ſortes, eyther that the ſinging of the ſaid Religious was by the will of God carried to S. *Clare*, or her hearing was extended

extended extraordinarily, & by the ſpeciall grace of God, euen to our Lady of Angells neere vnto Aſſiſium.

But this Saint was further fauored by a diuine reuelation which exceedingly comforted and reioyced her; for ſhe was by almighty God eſteemed worthy to ſee in ſpirit his holy Cribbe. The morning following, her Religious coming to ſee her, ſhe ſayd; Deare ſiſters, bleſſed for euer be our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, that it hath pleaſed him not to leaue me alone, as you haue done; but know that by the grace of his diuine maieſty, I haue heard all the ſeruice that this night hath byn performed in the Church of our holy Father S. *Francis*.

Of the ſpirituall doctrine, wherwith S. Clare *nourſed her daughters.*

CHAP. XVII.

THE virgin S. *Clare* acknowledged, that ſhe was committed to the pallace of the great King, for gouerneſſe and miſtres of his deare eſpouſes, therfore did ſhe teach them a ſublime doctrine, comforting, & aſſiſting them with ſuch loue and pitty, as with words cãnot be expreſſed. Firſt ſhe taught them to cleare their ſoules of all rumors of the world, that they might the more freely attaine to the high ſecrets of God. She alſo taught them

them to haue no affection to their carnall kindred, and intierely to forget their owne houſe, the better to pleaſe Ieſus Chriſt. She admoniſhed them alſo to ſurmount and miſpriſe the neceſſities of their bodies, & to get a habit of repreſſing the deceiptes, and appetites of the fleſh, by the bridle of reaſon. She likewiſe taught them that the ſubtill enemy armed vvith malice, continually addreſſeth his hidden ſnares to ſurpriſe the pure ſoules, and that he tempteth the pious in another ſort then worldlings.

Finally ſhe would haue them ſo imployed in handy labour for certaine houres, that they might afterwards be more prompt, and better prepared to the deſire of their Creatour by the exerciſe of prayer,

which after their labour they should vndertake, not leauing for such payne the fire of holy loue, but rather expelling by it the tepidity of deuotion already purchased. There was neuer seene a stricter obseruation of silence then amongst them, nor a greater forme, and example of vertue. There was neuer seene done in this holy house one act of vanity, neyther by wordes, nor signes; nor was there discouered by any vaine discourse any desire of lightnes, so much were they mortifyed, their holy Mistres giuing good example by wordes, and prious, and briefe documents; likewise teaching her disciples feruent desires, and admonishing them to possesse, and conserue them vnder the key & custody of strict silence.

By

By meanes of deuout preachers she procured to her daughters the holy word of God, wherof her owne was not the least part, she being filled with contentment and ioy, when she heard the word of God preached, and would with such deuotion, and consolation, reioice in the memory of her sweetest spouse Iesus Christ; that one time hearing the sermon of brother *Philip de Adria*, a most famous preacher, there was seene before this holy virgin a most beautifull child, which there remained during almost all the sermon, comforting her with his ioifull delectations, of which apparition she receiued such a sweetnes and delight, as she could no way explicate.

Albeit this moſt prudent virgin had neuer ſtudyed, yet did ſhe much delight to heare a learned man preach, vnderſtanding very well that vnder the wordes of ſcience lay hidden the ſweetnes of ſpirit, which herſelfe ſubtily obteined, & taſted vvith much more guſt. She accuſtomed to ſay, that the Sermon of whoſoeuer preaching the word of God was exceeding profitable to ſoules, conſidering that it is no leſſe prudence to know how ſometimes to gather beautifull, and ſweet flowers from amongſt groſſe, and rude thornes, then to eate the wholſome fruits of a good plant.

Pope *Gregory* the ninth one time at the inſtance of diuers Prelates cõmaunded, that no Religious man ſhould

ſhould preach at the monaſtery of poore Religious women, without his expreſſe permiſſion: wherat the pittifull mother complayning, in regard that thence forward her deuout & Religious daughters ſhold ſeldome be ſpiritually fed vvith holy doctrine, with teares ſhe ſaid: let then all my Religious be taken hence, ſince they are taken away, who gaue vs the food of ſpirituall life; withall ſending away the Religious, that appertained to her monaſtery to ſerue them in getting almes abroad, refuſing to haue Religious, that ſhould prouide them bread to relieue the body, ſith they were depriued by this meanes of all ſpirituall teachers that gaue the bread to nouriſh their ſoules: wherof his Holines being aduertiſed,

he presently reuoked his former prohibition, referring all to the disposition of the generall of the Friars Minors.

S. *Clare* had not only a prouident care of her Religious daughters soules, but of their bodies also that were feeble and tender, for whose necessary wantes she daly prouided with exceeding feruour and charity: she oftentimes in the night, when it was cold, going to visit and couer them whiles they slept: and if she found any one ouermuch benummed with cold, or otherwise in il disposition through strict obseruation of the common rigour, she instantly commaunded her to take some recreation, till her necessities were satisfied.

If any of her Religious daugh-

ters

ters were any time afflicted, or much grieued in mind through temptations, or were sorrowfull and melancholy, she would call her apart, and most louingly comfort her. She would sometimes fall prostrate herselfe at the feete of those that were heauy and afflicted, therby to put away the force of their griefe by her motherly cherishings, for which they in all submission yealding themselues to this their holy Mother, did not proue vngratefull. They likewise reuerenced the office of Prelature in their Mistres, following all their life time the conduct of so diligent and secure a guide, directing their actions by the espouse of Iesus Christ, admiring withall the excellency of such sanctity & charity.

Of

Of the deuotion which Pope Gregory the ninth had to the holy virgin S. Clare: *and of a letter which he wrote vnto her whiles he was yet Cardinall.*

CHAP. XVIII.

POPE Gregory the ninth had a meruailous confidence in the prayers of S. *Clare*, hauing experienced their great vertue & efficacy: and oftentimes when he was in any difficulty, both whiles he was Cardinall & Bishop of *Hostia*, and afterwards when he was Pope, he would by letters recommend himselfe to this glorious virgin, demaunding help of her, knowing

ing assuredly of what importance her assistance was: this being in him not only a great humility, but also worthy to be diligently imitated, to see the vicar of Iesus Christ vpon earth to begge help of a seruant of God, in recommending himselfe to her prayers.

This great Pastour knew very well what diuine loue could doe, & how freely pure virgins do find the port of the consistory of the diuine maiesty open. There is extant a very deuout letter of this Pope written to S. *Clare*, whiles he was Cardinal, which is heere inserted, to make it appeare that the spirit of God made his residence in this Prelate, and what deuotion he carryed to the sanctity the glorious virgin Saint *Clare*.

To

To the moſt deare ſiſter in Ieſus Chriſt, and mother of his holines, Siſter *Clare*, the ſeruant of Ieſus Chriſt; *Vgolin* miſerable ſinner, & Biſhop of Hoſtia recommendeth himſelfe, whatſoeuer he is, and what he may be. Well beloued ſiſter in Chriſt Ieſus, ſince the houre, that the neceſſity of my returne ſeparated me frō your holy ſpeaches, and depriued me of that pleaſure to conferre with you of celeſtiall treaſures, I haue had much ſorrow of hart, aboundance of teates in mine eyes, and haue felt an extreme griefe; and that in ſuch ſort, that if I had not found at the feete of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt the conſolation of his ordinary piety, I feare I had fallen into ſuch anguiſhes, as my ſpirit would haue

forsaken me, and my soule vtterly melted away: and not without reason, because that ioy failed me, with which I discoursed with your good company of the sacred body of our sweet Redeemer Iesus Christ, and of his presence vpon earth, celebrating the feast of Easter with you, and the other seruants of our Lord.

And as whiles our blessed Sauiour by his dolorous passion and death was absent from the presence of his disciples, they were possessed with an extreme griefe & affliction: so doth your absence procure my desolation. And though I acknouvledge my selfe a grieuous sinner, considering the prerogatiue of your meritts, and the rigour of your most holy Religion; yet with-

without doubt, the multitude of my ſinnes is ſuch, and ſo much haue I offended God the vniuerſall Lord, that I am not worthy to be vnited to the glory of the elect, nor to be ſequeſtred from vworldly occupations, if your tears & prayers doe not obtaine me pardon of my ſinnes; and therfore to you I commit my ſoule, to you I commend my ſpirit, as Ieſus Chriſt vpon the Croſſe recommended his ſpirit to his heauenly Father, to the end that in the terrible day of the vniuerſall iudgement you giue an account for me, if you be not diligent & carefull of my ſaluation: for I confidently belieue, that you may obtaine of the ſoueraigne iudge whatſoeuer by your deuotion and teares you ſhall at any time

alke

aſke or demaund of him. The Pope ſpeaketh not of coming to Aſſiſium, as I deſire, but I purpoſe to viſit you and your ſiſters at my firſt commodity. Recommend me I pray you to *Agnes* your ſiſter & mine, and to all your other ſiſters in Ieſus Chriſt.

Of the moſt feruent loue of Ieſus Chriſt whith inflamed the hart of Saint Clare : *and how the Diuell tormented her : of an extaſy wherin she continued a night and two dayes togeather.*

CHAP. XIX.

WHEN S. *Clare* heard any ſpeake of the paſſion of our Redeemer Ieſus

Christ, she oftentimes was accuſtomed to weepe in compaſſion, in ſuch ſort, that out of the ſacred wounds ſhe would ſomtimes draw dolorous feelings and affections, and at other times vnſpeakable ioyes & conſolations of admirable ſweetness: and the croſſe of Ieſus Christ, which with her deareſt ſpouſe ſhe carryed in her ſoule, the weight thereof gaue her ſo much more taſt of contentment as ſhe felt more griefe. The great aboundance of teares, which ſhe powred out for the moſt bitter paſſion of Ieſus Christ, kept her ſomtimes out of herſelfe; and the internall loue, which ſhe had imprinted in her hart, in manner continually repreſented vnto her Ieſus Christ crucified.

She ordinarily gaue example by workes, of what ſhe taught her Religious by wordes: for admoniſhing them often, and inſtructing them likewiſe ſecretly touching ſome exerciſe, before ſhe had ended her diſcourſe, ſhe was ſeene to power out of her eyes aboundance of teares. Among the houres of the diuine office that are ſung in the Church, ſhe was preſent with greateſt deuotion at the ſixt and ninth, by reaſon that at ſuch houres ſhe vvas crucifyed with her Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt.

The holy virgin retyring one tyme to her priuate deuotion after the ninth houre, the diuell came to her, & did beate her outragiouſly, hurting her withall ſo much in the face, that her eye was all bloud-

ſhoot, the ſigne remayning vpon her cheeke: but *S. Clare* omitted not for that to perſeuer in her prayer. And to the end ſhe might with the more deuotion apply herſelfe to the ſweet contentments which ſhe conceiued in the often meditating of Ieſus Chriſt crucifyed, ſhe ordinarily contemplated the ſacred myſtery of the fiue woundes: and therfore ſhe learned by hart the office of the holy Croſſe, as the true louer of the holy Croſſe of Saint *Francis* had taught her. She accuſtomed to vveare next her naked fleſh a girdle of thirteene knottes, vvhereunto alſo were little ſtones faſtned in forme of knottes: vvhich ſhe did in memory of the ſacred vvoundes and dolours of our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt.

One

One Lent vpon Maunday Thurſday, wherupon our Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſhewed a particuler loue to his diſciples, at the houre of the agony, that our Redeemer did ſweet bloud and water in the garden, this holy Virgin retyred into her Oratory full of deep ſorrow, ioyning herſelfe with Almighty God in prayer, as if ſhe had ſeene him praying, and as if by contemplation of the ſoule of Ieſus Chriſt ſorrowfull euen to death, ſhe herſelfe had felt and ſuffered his priſon, his deriſions, his iniuries, reproaches, affrontes, beatings, ſentence, Croſſe, and moſt ignominious death, carrying in her memory a like ſorrow: wherfore as wholly tranſported ſhe ſate vpon a ſtraw bedd, and all that night, and the

day following, ſhe was ſo abſorpt and rapt out of herſelfe, that her eyes being open and without motion, ſhe ſeemed to hold them fixed in one place, and remayned ſo inſenſible, being conioyntly crucifyed with Ieſus Chriſt, that a Religious, familiar vnto her, coming often to ſee if ſhe wanted any thing, ſhe found her alwayes in one manner.

But vpon the night of holy Saturday, this deuout Religious came to her deare mother with a candle, partly by ſignes, and partly by wordes, making her the beſt ſhe could to vnderſtand the commaundment that the holy Father S. *Francis* gaue her, that ſhe ſhould not let paſſe one day without taking & eating ſomthing, ſo that in the

the preſence of this Religious, Saint *Clare*, as if ſhe came out of another place ſayd vnto her, what need haue you to light this candle, is it not day? wherto the Religious anſwered: Mother the night of holy Thurſday is paſt, as alſo good Friday, and we are now in the night of Eaſter eue; the Saint replyed, my daughter bleſſed be this ſleep, which Almighty God at length after my long deſire hath graunted me, but I admoniſh and commaũd you, not to ſpeake hereof to any creature liuing, whiles I ſhall liue in this world.

Of many miracles wrought by S. Clare, by the ſigne and vertue of the holy Croſſe.

CHAP. XX.

OVR Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt recompenced well the pious deſires, and good workes of his beloued virgin *S. Clare*: for as ſhe was inflamed with an infinite loue of the miſtery of the holy Croſſe, ſo by the vertue and power of the ſame Croſſe, ſhe became noble in the ſignes and miracles of Ieſus Chriſt, that oftentimes in making the ſigne of the holy Croſſe vpon the ſicke, they were miraculouſly cured, and inſtantly healed of all

ſortes of diſeaſes.

A Religious man called *Stephen*, hauing a hoat feuer that exceedingly vexed him, the holy Father S. *Francis* ſent hin to S. *Clare*, to make the ſigne of the Croſſe vpon him, as one that well knew her perfection and verue, which he exceedingly honored. Now the vertuous Lady *Hortulana* Mother to Saint *Clare*, was then in the couent of S. *Damian*, for a little before, conſidering that her daughters had eſpouſed Ieſus Chriſt, ſhe came to them to Religion, where this happy Lady ſerued as a true gardiner in the garden incloſed with thoſe Virgins, our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt, with the glorious virgin *Agnes* ſiſter to Saint *Clare*, and the other Religious, all repleniſhed with the holy

Ghoſt, to whome the holy Father Saint *Francis* ſent many diſeaſed, whome they cured, after hauing made vpon them the ſigne of the holy Croſſe, which they moſt hartily honored. The ſayd Religious then being ſent to S. *Clare*, ſhe as the daughter of obedience thereto commaunded by the holy Father S. *Francis*, preſently made vpon him the ſigne of the Croſſe: then left him a little to ſleep in the Church, in the place where ſhe was accuſtomed to pray, and the Religious hauing a little repoſed aroſe ſound, ſecure, and freed of his infirmity: then he returned to Saint *Francis*, by whome he had byn ſent to S. *Damian*, & conſequently was cured.

A child of three years old of the Citty

Citty of Spoletum called *Matthew*, had by chaunce a ſtone thurſt into his noſe, whence it could not be gotten out, ſo that the child was in extreme perill, wherupon he was brought to Saint *Clare* who hauing made the ſigne of the Croſſe vpon him, the ſtone incontinently fell out of his noſe, and he was perfectly well.

Another child likewiſe of Perusia hauing a filme vpon his eyes was brought to S. *Clare*, who touching the eye of the child, and making the ſigne of the Croſſe thereupon, willed thē that had preſented the child vnto her to carry it vnto her Mother Hortulana, that ſhe might alſo make the ſigne of the Croſſe vpon it, which hauing done the eye became cleere, and being purged

purged of the filme that obſcured it, he was preſently cured: wherupon S. *Clare* affirmed, that this miracle was wrought by the merits of her mother, who finding ſuch glory to be attributed vnto her, reputed herſelfe vnworthy thereof.

One of her Religious called *Beneuenta*, hauing had for 12. yeares togeather an impoſtume vnder her arme, which did purge by fiue ſeuerall iſſues, S. *Clare* had compaſſion therof, and made vpon her the ſigne of the holy Croſſe, then with her owne hands taking away the playſter, ſhe was cured of her long continued ſoares. Another of her Religious called *Amia*, being for more then a yeares ſpace afflicted with the dropſy, togeather with

with an extreme paine in her ſides, and a burning feuer, S. *Clare* conceiued a very ſtrong compaſſion of her, and therefore hauing recourſe to her noble and infallible medicine, ſhe made vpon her body the ſigne of the holy Croſſe in the name of her beloued Ieſus Chriſt, and the Religious was perfectly cured. Another ſeruant of God borne at Peruſia had for two years togeather ſo loſt her voice, that one could ſcarſely heare her ſpeak; but hauing vnderſtood by a viſion which ſhe had the night of the aſſumption of our bleſſed Lady, that S. *Clare* ſhould cure her, the poore afflicted creature hauing very patiently expected the breake of day, repayred with a ſtrong confidence vnto that holy virgin, and by

by ſignes craued her benediction, which fauour hauing obtained, her voice, which ſo long time ſhe had wanted, became as cleere and ſhrill as euer it had byn.

Another Religious called Chriſtina, that had bin long time deafe in one of her eares, and hauing in vaine tryed many remedies, Saint *Clare* making the ſigne of the croſſe vpon her head, and with her hand touching her eare, ſhe recouered her hearing as perfectly and clearly as before. Another Religious call *Andrea* had a diſeaſe in her throat, the griefe wherof procured her much impatience: it being admirable, that among ſo many prayers inflamed with diuine loue, their ſhould be a ſoule ſo could, & among ſuch prudent virgins one ſo indiſcret

indiſcret and moderate.

This Religious feeling herſelfe one night more tormented with her infirmity then ordinarily, afflicted & impatient, that her paine did rather increaſe then diminiſh, ſhe ſo cruſhed and preſſed her throat, making thereby appeare her intention to choake herſelfe, thinking by violence to expell that ſwelling, ſo to auoid longer torment, & through ignorance attempting to do more then was the will of God. But whiles that poore Religious buſied herſelfe in this folly, Saint *Clare* by diuine inſpiration had knowledge thereof, wherfore calling one of her Religious, ſhe vvilled her to haſten downe, boyle an egge in the ſhell, & cauſe ſiſter *Andrea* to ſwallow it, which done

done to bring her to her preſence. The Religious inſtantly dreſſed the egge, and forthwith brought it to the ſicke party, whome ſhe found little better then dead, hauing ſo cruſhed her throat, that her ſpeach was vtterly gone, yet ſhe made her ſwallow the egge ſo well as ſhe could, then rayſing her from her ſtraw bed, ſhe with much labour led her to Saint *Clare*, who thus ſpake vnto her: Wretched ſiſter confeſſe thee to God, & haue contrition, for what thou intendeſt to doe, & acknovvledge that Ieſus Chriſt wil giue thee health far better, then thou with thine owne handes hadſt purpoſed to doe: change this euill life into a better, for thou ſhalt neuer recouer another ſicknes that shal ſucceed this, but

but ſhalt dye therof. Theſe words procured in this Religious a ſpirit of compunction and contrition, ſo that ſhe being intierly cured of this grieuous infirmity, amended her life, falling a little after into another ſicknes, which Saint *Clare* had foretold, wherof ſhe ended her life piouſly.

It doth manifeſtly appeare by theſe examples, and by many other marueylous thinges, that the tree of the Croſſe of our bleſſed Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt was deeply planted in her hart, & that in a meruailous māner the fruits therof did interiourly recreate her ſoule, ſith the leaues did worke exteriourly ſuch remedies by the hands & merits of his glorious Saint.

How Saint Clare *blessed bread, vpon which the signe of the Crosse miraculously remayned.*

CHAP. XXI.

SAINT *Clare* was a disciple of the Crosse, and of so notable fame & sanctity, that not only great Prelates & Cardinalls much desired to see her, to heare and discourse with her, for which cause they often visited her; but the Pope himselfe bare her also this affection, in so much that Pope Innocent the fourth repayred to her monastery, to heare of her, as a secretary of the holy Ghost, celestiall and diuine discourses, And hauing a long

long time conferred with her of matters of ſaluation, and of the prayſes of God, whiles they intertayned themſelues in ſo pious a diſcourſe, S. *Clare* cauſed dinner to be prepared, and the tables for the Religious to be couered, cauſing bread to be brought thither, with intention to procure the vicar of Ieſus Chriſt to bleſſe it, to be afterwards kept of deuotion. Their diſcourſe then being ended, S. *Clare* fell vpō her knees before the Pope, beſeeching him to bleſſe the bread. vvhereto his holines anſvvered: daughter *Clare*, I will that you bleſſe it your ſelfe making therupon the ſigne of the Croſſe: the Saint therto anſwered, moſt holy Father, pardon me if you pleaſe, for if I ſhould doe it, I ſhould deſerue ſharpe re-

prehenſion, in preſuming to giue my benedictiō in preſence of your holines. The Pope againe replyed: well, that no preſumption be imputed vnto you, and that you may merit thereby, I command you by holy Obedience to bleſſe theſe loues, making vpon them the ſigne of the Croſſe. This daughter of obedience lifted vp her hand, making the ſigne of the Croſſe vpon the bread; whence inſued an admirable accident, for the Croſſe remayned vpon the bread, whereof part was eaten of deuotion, & the reſt reſerued as a holy Relique, which euent filled the Pope with admiration, for which he gaue thankes to God; then gaue his benediction to S. *Clare*, who receiued it with great humility, and was much

much comforted withall.

Of many infirmityes of the glorious virgin S. Clare: *of her weakenes; and how she was visited by the Protectour.*

CHAP. XXII.

THE Glorious virgin S. *Clare* had now forty yeares run the race of the most eminent vertue and practise of pouerty, hauing broken the alabaster of her body in the most strict prison by fasting and rigorous disciplines, and by this meanes filled the house of the holy Church with the most pretious oyntment of her vertues, wherwith she drew after her an in-

finit number of ſoules to the ſeruice of Ieſus Chriſt. And as ſhe already approached to the recompence of eternall glory, hauing ſupported diuers infirmities, and conſumed the forces of her body in her firſt yeares by the rigour of pennance, ſhe was alſo in her latter dayes oppreſſed, and afflicted with diuers grieuous ſickneſſes. And becauſe in the time of her health ſhe was alſo enriched in ſuch ſort with the merit of good workes, that being ſicke ſhe gayned the true riches of the merits of patience, ſhe yet inioyed the fruits of her vertues, that were ripened in afflictions and moleſtations, occaſioned by diuerſity of diſeaſes. But the vertue of her patience doth euidently appeare, in that hauing

byn

byn twenty eight yeares togeather afflicted with diuers diſeaſes, ſhe was neuer heard to vtter the leaſt murmure or complaint: but continually were heard to proceed out of her mouth pious wordes, and thankes-giuing to Almighty God.

Now being exceedingly weakened with infirmity, and euery moment ſeeming to her the drawing on of her life towardes an end, it pleaſed our Lord Ieſus Chriſt to prolonge it, till ſhe might be viſited by the eminent Prelates of the Roman Church, wherof ſhe was a ſeruant, and a ſpeciall child; for the Pope being yet at Lyons, and this Saint beginning to be more tormented with her infirmities, then ſhe was accuſtomed to be, a ſword of ſorrow pierced through

the ſoule of her beloued daughters. But a virgin, ſeruant of Ieſus Chriſt, a very deuout Religious of the monaſtery of S. *Paul*, and order of S. *Benedict*, had at that time this viſion following. It ſeemed to her that ſhe did viſit S. *Clare* with all her ſiſters at Saint *Damian*, whome ſhe ſaw in a ſorrowfull, yet pretious bed, about which they all lamented expecting her death, and withall ſhe ſaw come to the bolſter of the ſayd bed a very beautifull woman, who ſayd to them that wept. my daughters weep not for her that is yet to liue, for ſhe cannot dye, till our Lord and all his diſciples doe come. A little after the Roman Court came to Peruſia, where the increaſe of S. *Clares* ſickenes being diuulged, the Cardinall

of

of Hoſtia haſtened with great diligence to viſit the Eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt, whoſe Father he was by office, gouernour by ſpeciall ſollicitude, foſterer and friend in moſt pure and chaſt amity; & he comforted her, and vvith his ovvne handes adminiſtring vnto her the moſt bleſſed Sacrament of the Euchariſt; and then made a very deuout ſermon to the Religious. *S. Clare* with great humility, & in the name of our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt, beſeeching him to accept into his Protection that her family, & all her other poore ſiſters of other monaſteries; but aboue all ſhe moſt inſtantly beſought him, to obtaine of the Pope, & the Colledge of Cardinalls, a priuiledge & confirmation of holy pouerty.

Whereto the Cardinall gaue his word, & as a faithfull Father of her Religiõ, & one moſt deuout & affectionate to S. *Clare*, did afterwardes effect it: for Pope *Innocent* the fourth at her moſt inſtant requeſt, confirmed the Rule, which the holy Father S. *Francis* had inſtituted for her, as is formerly recorded, wherof S. *Clare* had neuer vntill then other confirmation written but that of the ſaid Cardinall, becauſe the Popes ſuppoſing to induce S. *Clare*, not to bynd her Religious to ſuch an extreme pouerty, did ſtill deferre to confirme her Rule by writing. But *Innocent* the fourth ſeing the perſeuerance, & laſt will of Saint *Clare*, graunted the ſame vnto her by a Bull, the eleuenth, and laſt yeare of his reigne,

reigne, as we haue before recorded. And the yeare being almoſt expired, the Pope came with his Cardinalls from Perusia to Aſſiſium; whereby the firſt viſion touching the death of the holy virgin was accompliſhed. For the Pope being in his office more then a mā, by the authority which he hath of Ieſus Chriſt vpō earth, whoſe perſon he repreſenteth in the temple of the Church militant, the Cardinalls accompanying his Holines, repreſented the diſciples of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.

How Pope Innocent *the fourth visited Saint* Clare *in her last sicknes, and gaue her absolution.*

CHAP. XXIII.

THE diuine prouidence wold no longer deferre the accomplishment of the will of Saint *Clare*, but her Spouse Iesus Christ came to eleuate into his celestiall pallace his poore Espouse & Pilgrime vpon earth, who desired nothing more: that being deliuered of this mortall body, she might haue the sight, & full fruition of her most glorious spouse Iesus Christ in his celestiall Kingdome.

Now

Now then the members of this ſacred virgin being by continuance of her ſicknes wholy decayed, there befell her a new weakenes, which being an euident token that ſhe should in short time be called of God, which ſhe vſed as a ladder to mount vp to eternall ſaluation: wherupon Pope *Innocent* the forth came to the monaſtery of *S. Damian*, accompanyed with many Cardinalls, to viſit the ſeruant of God, not doubting but she, whoſe life he had already approued, was the moſt perfect in ſanctity of all vvomen of his tyme; and therefore worthy to haue her death honored by his preſence. His holines then being entred, he went directly to the glorious Virgin, & comming neere to her bed, he gaue her his hand

hand to kiſſe, which fauour Saint *Clare* vvith exceeding ioy receiued.

But beſides that, she with great humility beſought him to affoard her his feete to kiſſe: the Pope to content her ſat downe vpon a little bench, and deuoutly preſented vnto her his Apoſtolicall feete, vpon which this glorious Saint reuerently layd her face and mouth, moſt affectionatly kiſſing them: then with the ſerenity of an Angelicall countenance, ſhe demaunded of him remiſſion of all her ſinnes; wherto the Pope anſwered: would to God my deare ſiſter, I had no more need of ſuch a pardon: but finally he gaue her the benefit of abſolution, & the gift of his benediction, & then left her in peace.

She hauing that morning receiued the moſt ſacred communion at the hands of the Prouinciall of the Friars Minors of that Prouince, with her hands ioyned togeather, & her eyes eleuated towards heauen, ſhe weeping ſaid to her Religious: My daughters, prayſe Almighty God for the benefit it hath pleaſed him to beſtow vpon me this day, which is ſuch, that the heauens & the earth are not ſufficient to recompence it, ſith this day I haue both receiued my Lord God, & am made worthy to ſee his Vicar vpon earth.

How S. Clare comforted her sister S. Agnes.

CHAP. XXIIII.

THE daughters were all about their mother, without whom they were in a short tyme to remaine as orphans; the consideration whereof deeply pierced their soules with a most bitter griefe, that neyther heauines of sleep, nor hunger could withdraw thē frō the presence of their mother; the present contentment, which they receiued in beholding her, making them forget to eate and sleep, because al their exercise was to weep, and particulerly her most deuout sister *Agnes*, who was expresly come

come from the monaſterv, which ſhe had newly erected at Florence to be preſent at her death.

Being then in this anguiſh, ſhe turned towardes her ſiſter, & moſt inſtantly prayed her, not to depriue her of her preſence: wherto Saint *Clare* anſwered, Deare ſiſter, whome I cordially loue, ſith it hath pleaſed God that I depart, be you ioyfull, & weep no more, for I anſwere you, our Lord will ſhortly come to you, to viſit you with an exceeding conſolation before your death.

Of the death of the blessed Virgin S. Clare: and of a vision, which one of her Religious saw.

CHAP. XXV.

THE holy virgin, and seruant of Iesus Christ, was many dayes towards the end of her life afflicted with diuers diseases, the fayth and deuotion, which at that time ech one bare her, exceedingly increasing, yea so farre forth, that she was honored as a Saint, being ordinarily visited by Cardinalls, and other Prelates: but which is more admirable to heare, hauing byn seauēteene dayes without force to receiue any sustenance that

that was preſented vnto her, ſhe vvas neuertheles ſo fortified of God, and incouraged of his diuine maieſty, that ſhe exhorted all thoſe that would comfort her, to be prompt in the ſeruice of God.

A Religious man intending to comfort her, and to perſwade her to haue patience in ſo grieuous a ſicknes, that procured her ſo much torment, ſhe with a ſmiling countenance, and cleare voice anſwered him: brother, ſince the time that I knew the grace of my God, by the meanes of his moſt humble ſeruant Saint *Francis*, no payne hath byn troubleſome vnto me, no pēnance hath ſeemed difficult, nor any ſicknes irkſome.

And as almighty God approached neere vnto her, and her ſoule

being as it were at the doore to goe forth, the blessed virgin wold haue the most pious and spirituall Friars Minors to be present, to discourse vnto her of the dolorous and bitter passion of our Lord Iesus Christ, & by their pious words to inflame her hart more in the loue of God: wherfore some of them, who were vnto her true brethren in our Redeemer Iesus Christ were present, and among other brother *Iuniperus*, the familiar of our Lord Iesus Christ, who often vttered vnto her such fiery and inflamed words of the omnipotent God, that she by his presence being filled with an extreme ioy, one day demaunded of him, if he then, knevv nothing new from almighty God: wherupon brother *Iuniperus* opening his

his mouth to anſwere her, there iſſued out of the fornace of his inflamed hart, infinite ſparkes of ſuch ſublime wordes, that this holy virgin receiued therof much conſolation. Finally turning her Angelicall face towardes her deare and beloued daughters & ſiſters there preſent, all of them bitterly weeping, ſhe recommended vnto them the pouerty of our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt in this her laſt paſſage, prayſing and thanking God for the infinit benefitts, which they had receiued of his diuine maieſty, which ſhe particulerly recounted vnto them; then ſhe gaue them all her benediction, and alſo to all the Religious of her monaſtery preſent and abſent, & likewiſe to all thoſe, who ſhould hereafter enter into her order.

There were present two companions of S. *Francis*, to wit brother *Angelus*, who though much afflicted, did yet comfort the others, & the right simple brother *Leo*, who ceased not to kisse the bed of the holy virgin who was leauing the world, & was much lamẽted of her daughters, because they were left orphanes, and were no more in this life to see their most holy mother, and therfore they accompanyed her soule to heauen with abouadance of teares, without power to admit any other consolation, then to desire to goe with her: wherwith being so afflicted, they could not without difficulty forbeare with their nailes to rent their faces, but not being permitted them to discharge themselues of such griefe

exerci-

exteriourly, it did inflame in them a more burning fire within: for those espouses of Iesus Christ were sufficiently mortifyed by rigour of Religion, albeit the force of griefe did constreine them to cast forth lowd cryes and sighes, and to powre out riuers of teares. The holy virgin at length being turned towardes them, began very sweetly to say vnto her soule, Go my soule, go out securely, thou hast an assured guide to performe this voiage: for he who is thy Creatour hath sanctifyed thee, and hath alwayes cõserued thee, affecting thee with a tender loue, equall with that of a mother towardes her child: and thou my God be praysed for hauing created me.

A Religious sister asking her

what ſhe ment thereby, ſhe anſwered; I ſpeake to my bleſſed ſoule; her moſt glorious ſpouſe Ieſus Chriſt not being far from her, attending for her: then turning to one of her Religious ſhe ſayd: doe you not ſee my daughter the King of glory whome I ſee? Almighty God alſo laid his hand vpō another Religious, who ſaw with her corporall eyes through the teares that diſtilled from them a glorious viſion: ſhe being pierced through with the dart of ſorrow, caſt her eyes towards the gate of the houſe, & ſaw to enter a great proceſſiō of ſacred virgins richly cloathed in white, hauing ech one a crowne of gold vpon their head: but one of them appeared more beautifull, ſumptuous, and glittering then the reſt,

hauing

hauing vpon her head an imperiall Crowne garniſhed with pretious ſtones, from whoſe countenance proceeded a light ſo ſhining, that it conuerted the obſcurity of the night into cleare and bright day, it being without doubt the moſt glorious virgin Mary, Queene of virgins, who came to the bed of the Eſpouſe of her Sonne, to whome inclyning ſhe moſt gratiouſly imbraced her, and incontinently ſhe was couered & the bed alſo by the other virgins vvith an extreme ſumptuous mantle: ſo the day following, which was the eleuenth of *Auguſt*, her holy ſoule aſcēded to heauen, there to be crowned with perpetuall glory.

Happy was her departure out of this miſerable life, ſith it was the en-

try into that of eternall felicity: for the faſtes, which this Saint performed in this exile, ſhe is now ioiful, hauing her fill at the magnificall table of the Cittizens of heauen; & for the humility and baſenes of her habit, ſhe is now glorioufly attired with the glory of paradiſe. The continuall ſighes & deſires, which ſhe had for the preſence and loue of her deerly beloued ſpouſe, are accompliſhed by the bleſſed viſion of God face to face, and by the aſſured fruition of the ſoueraigne good: leauing the way open to the example of ſanctity, that we blind and miſerable mortall Creatures, reiecting theſe ſhort, falſe, and deceiptfull pleaſures of this world, may purchaſe the permanent, true, & aſſured delightes that indure eternally.

Of the honorable obſequies that were performed for Saint Clare.

CHAP. XXVI.

WHILES the ſoule of S. *Clare* departed this life, the report of her deceaſe was incontinently diuulged through Aſſiſium, frō whence both men and women in ſuch aboundance ſpeedily flocked to the monaſtery, that none ſeemed to be left in the Citty, ech one preſently eſteeming her a Saint, calling her the Eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt, and accōpanying their diſcourſes with great aboundance of teares of deuotion. The officers of iuſtice repayred

payred thither accompanyed with many warlike Champions, and a great number of armed men, which that night guarded the monaſtery, for feare that pretious treaſure might be bereaued thē. The night following, the Pope with all his court came thither, accompanyed withall the neighbour people.

The Religious men of S. *Damian* being ready to begin the office of the dead, the Pope would haue had ſaid the office of the holy virgins, wherin he would haue canonized her before her buriall: but the Cardinall of Hoſtia hauing demonſtrated vnto him, that it was fitting in this affayre to proceed with more humane prudence, the Pope permitted the ſaid Religious ſolemnely to proceed in the office

of

of the dead, according to their ordinary & accuſtomed manner.

The ſaid Cardinall hauing taken for his text, *vanitas vanitatum, & omnia vanitas*, made a very worthy and deuout Sermon, to manifeſt the vanity of thinges appertayning only to this world, where he exceedingly exalted that moſt eminent contemner of vanities which ended, all the Cardinalls and other Prelates accompanyed her holy body with an exemplar deuotion. All the funeralls being very ſolemnely ended, then Cittizens of Aſſiſiũ thinking it not ſecure, that this pretious treaſure ſhould remaine ſo far out of their Citty, they cauſed her holy body with exceeding great pompe to be tranſported, ſinging pſalmes and Hymnes

with

with the ſound & melody of diuers muſicall inſtruments, in a very ſolemne proceſſion, carrying it into the Chuch of Saint *George* within their Citty, where the body of S. *Francis* had formerly byn repoſed. And it was very reaſonable, that he, who in his life had giuen a patterne of the way of life vnto this holy virgin, ſhould as it were prophetically preparre her a place of ſepulture.

There was then a great repaire and confidence of people from diuers Cittyes, townes, and villages vnto Aſſiſium, to thanke Ieſus Chriſt, and to pray vnto this bleſſed creature, proclayming this holy virgin to be really a Saint & glorious, who now liueth in paradiſe with the Angells, hauing bin alrea-

dy

dy ſo much honored of men vpon earth. O bleſſed virgin pray now to God for vs, & gayne our ſoules to Ieſus Chriſt in heauen, as thou haſt conuerted and gayned ſo mamany liuing vpon earth. The holy virgin paſſed this tranſitory life to the other of reſt, the yeare of grace 1253. the tweluth of Auguſt, forty yeares after her perfect vocation to God, and the 60. yeare of her age. She was interred the 12. of Auguſt, vpon which day her feaſt is ſolemnized at Aſſiſium, and ouer all the holy Roman Church.

Of the miracles wrought by the merits of S. Clare: *and first of poſſeſſed perſons that haue byn deliuered.*

CHAP. XXVII.

THE chiefeſt marks that ſaints can haue, and the worthyeſt teſtimonies of fayth and reuerence, are ſanctity of life, and the perfection of good workes: for S. *Iohn Baptiſt* wrought no miracles during his life, and yet they who haue wrought many, ſhall not be eſteemed more holy then he: and therfore the notable renowne of the Religious life of Saint *Clare*, might ſuffice to make her appeare ſuch

ſuch as ſhe is, if the tepidity, coldnes, and remiſſnes of the world, & partly alſo deuotion did not otherwiſe require. But ſince this holy virgin was not only in her life time by her merits ſwallowed vp in the depth of diuine illuminations, but was alſo after her death a meruayelous ſplendour ouer all the world by the light of her miracles: and as the moſt pure Verity hath cauſed the recording of many of her miracles, that they remayne as teſtimonies, memory, & denuntiation of her Sanctity: therfore alſo the multitude of them inforce me to recount ſome, that they may be generally diuulged & knowne.

A Child called *Innes*, ſeeming not ſo ſicke as poſſeſſed, in regard that ſomtimes he caſt himſelfe into

the fire, or into the riuer, fell rudely vpon the ground, and with such fury did bite the stones, that he brake his teeth withall, forced blood out of his head, and wrested his mouth most strangely, yea sometimes would seeme a monster, so doubling & foulding his members, that his feete would be vpon his necke. He was ordinarily twice in the day afflicted with the like torments in such sort, that two persons sufficed not to restraine him from tearing of his cloathes, yea there was great difficulty to keep him from murdering of himselfe. Phisitians hauing in vaine laboured to cure him, at length his Father named *Guidalote* had recourse to the merits of S. *Clare*, affectionately saying: O holy Virgin honored

of the world, to thee I addresse my selfe, beseeching thee to obtaine of God my Sonnes health: then full of confidence he conducted him to the sepulcher of this Saint, & laid him thereupon, and he presently miraculously obtained the fauour he desired, his Sonne being perfectly cured of all his infirmities, & was neuer troubled after.

Alexandrina a womã of the town of *Frata*, neere to *Perusia*, was possessed and tormented with an abhominable diuell, to whose power she was so left, that he made her to fly as a bird to the top of a rocke neere to the riuer of Tibur, then made her descend to a branch of a tree that did hang ouer the said riuer, thẽ to hang vpon that branch, there playing her idle prankes.

This woman had halfe her body vtterly benummed, for which the Phiſitians could find no remedy: at length ſhe came with great deuotion to the ſhrine of Saint *Clare*, and inuocating her merits ſhe was cured of all her afflictions; hauing alſo the gout in her left hand, her body halfe paraliticall was cured, and withall ſhe was intierly freed from the oppreſſion and ſeruitude of the diuell.

Another woman of the ſame place was cured before the ſaid ſepulcher, who was in like ſort poſſeſſed with the diuell, & had withall many other grieuous infirmityes.

Of many that were miraculously cured of diuers diseases.

CHAP. XXVIII.

A French Youth, going to Rome in company of other his Countreymen, fell sicke & lay by the way, loosing through the force of his infirmity his sense and speach, and his body became deformed as it were a monster, then became he so furious, that he could not be held, so that he seemed ready to dye: which spectacle did not only moue his companions to compassion, but did also exceedingly terrify them: and therfore they boūd him to a beere, & carry-

od him to the Church of S. *Clare*; where hauing placed him before her ſepulcher, they applyed themſelues all to prayer, inuocating the help of God and of the Saint, vvho made ſuch interceſſiō for the yong man, that he was in an inſtant intierly cured.

A man of the Citty of *Spoletum* called *Valentine*, was exceedingly afflicted with the falling ſicknes, in which he fell ſix times a day in whatſoeuer place he was, and beſides he had one foote ſo wreſted awry, that he was vtterly lamed: he was brought vpon an aſſe to the ſepulcher of S. *Clare*, where hauing remained two dayes & three nights, the third day attempting to moue his lame foote, and none being neere him, he made ſuch a noyſe,

noyse, that being heard by some a farre off, they seemed to heare the breaking of a piece of dry wood; and the man was instantly cured of both the one and the other his said diseases.

The Sonne of a woman of *Spoletum* called *Iames* of twelue yeares old being blind, could not goe without a guide: and being once forsaken of him who conducted him, he fell into a pit, brake one of his armes, and hurt his head. The night following sleeping by the bridge of *Varue*, a woman appeared vnto him, and sayd: *Iames*, if thou wilt come to me to Assisium I wil cure thee. Arising early in the morning, he much admired at the vision, which he recounted to two other blind men, who answe-

ared him: Brother we haue heard of a Lady lately dead in the Citty of Assisium, at whose sepulcher God worketh by her merits many miracles: which the blind youth hauing heard, he left the two other blind men, and with a strong confidence hastned to Assisium, and in the way he lodged at *Spoletum*, where in the night he had the same vision, which increased the hope of the recouering his sight, and made him hasten in time to arriue at the Church of S. *Clare*, where finding it so filled vvith people that he could not enter, was greatly troubled.

But seing no remedy, he rested at the dore, and there remayned till the euening, where this poore blind youth being weary with his iorney,

iorney, and afflicted that he could not enter into the Church, ſetled himſelfe the beſt he could to reſt vpon the ground, laying his head againſt a great ſtone, and ſo ſlept, and preſently the third time he heard the ſayd voice, ſpeaking: *Iames*, God wil do thee good, if thou canſt enter, and incontinently awaking out of that ſleep, he began to cry, and begge of the people with aboundance of teares to permit him to enter, which hauing a long time continued, they gaue him place, & hauing diſcloathed himſelfe, putting his girdle about his necke, he went to the ſepulcher of the Saint, before which with great reuerence and humility her fell vpon his knees, and hauing perſiſted ſomtime in prayer, beſeeching

ching S. *Clare* to intercede for him, he fell into a gentle slumber, wherein S. *Clare* appeared vnto him, and sayd, Arise *Iames*, for thou art already cured, and being awaked, and rayſed vpon his feete, the deſect of his ſight left him, & by the vertues and meritts of this Saint he clearly ſaw; for which he glorifyed God, and gaue him thankes for ſo admirable a work, exhorting all people preſent to do the like, & to praiſe our Redemer Ieſus Chriſt in this his holy ſeruant,

Of

Of the lame and paralitiqes cured by Saint Clare.

CHAP. XXIX.

A Citizen of Perusia called *Iohn-Martin de Buoni*, went one time with many other Citizens out of the Citty to fight against their enemies of *Fullinium*: the skirmish being ended, *Iohn* found his hand exceedingly hurt with the blow of a flint stone, and the bone being broken he was therby maymed: and hauing byn at extreme cost for the cure therof, yet without any remedy, but still inforced to carry his arme in a skarfe, he alwayes complayned therof as of a desperate mayme, &

asked

aſked Coũſell about cutting off his hand; but hauing one day heard ſpeach of marueylous thinges wrought by almighty God at the interceſſion of S. *Clare*, he with a ſtrong fayth vowed to goe to her ſepulcher, whither arriuing he very deuoutly preſented her a hand of wax, then fell vpon his knees, & made his feruent prayer to God, that it would pleaſe his diuine maieſty, by the merits & interceſſion of that moſt holy virgin to cure him: the ſucceſſe was admirable, for before this gentleman aroſe, he felt his hand intierly cured, for which he gaue thankes to God & to the Saint.

A young man likewiſe of *Caſtrouitoli* called *Petronius*, was ſo cõſumed with a diſeaſe which had

for

for three years continually afflicted him, that he ſeemed to be already withered, & corrupted, yea he was therby brought to ſuch weaknes, that in going he ſtouped with his face as it were vpon the ground, & found great difficulty to walke, though with a ſtaffe in his hand to ſupport him.

His Father hauing alredy bin exceedingly charged about his cure, continued yet in reſolution to imploy the reſidue of his ſubſtáce out of his vehemét deſire to ſee his ſon cured. But the Phiſitians hauing aſſured him that there was no hope of cure by humane art, he had recourſe to the new Saint, of whoſe vertue hauing heard much report, he cauſed his ſonne to be carryed thither where the Reliques of Saint

Clare

Clare repoſed. And hauing made his prayers by her ſepulcher, he recouered his former health, and miraculouſly aroſe ſound & ſtreight, as if he had neuer indured infirmity, yea he ran, leapt, and prayſed God, & S. *Clare*, inducing all preſent to haue greater faith and deuotion towards her.

In the towne of Saint *Quirice*, within the Dioceſſe of Aſſiſium, a child of ten yeares old, hauing byn borne lame, went ſo pittifully and painfully, that if he chaunced to fall to the ground, he could not riſe againe, but with extreme difficulty.

His mother had many times recommended him to S. *Francis*, yet found he no redreſſe: but vnderſtanding afterwardes, that the virgin

gin Saint *Clare* was very famous for infinit miracles, which by her meritts were wrought at her ſepulcher, ſhe cauſed her Sonne to be carryed thither; & inconeinently after that he had bin there, his bones were ſetled in their places, & his mẽbers were cured: that which Saint *Francis* intreated by deuout prayers would not graunt, he referred to be obtayned & impetrated by the meritts of his diſciple S. *Clare*.

A Cittizen of *Eugubium* called *James le France*, had a Sonne of fiue yeares old ſo lame, that he could not goe, which he very impatiently ſupported, ſeeming to him that the torment of his child was a reproach vnto his honour and family;

When

When this child was vpon the ground, he would wallow & creep in the duſt in that ſort to goe, and if he would ſtay himſelfe againſt any thing to ariſe, he could not, for nature had giuen him only a deſire, but no force or ability therunto. But his Father and Mother conſulted to make a vow for him, and to offer him to the merits of Saint *Clare*, to whome they promiſed, that being cured he ſhould be called hers. The vow being made, the eſpouſe of Ieſus Chriſt cured this child, who began ſo well to go, that without any help he went to the ſepulcher of the ſayd Saint.

A woman of Caſtell-*Mewrie*, called *Plewaria*, had bin long time benummed, in ſuch ſort as ſhe could not goe without a ſtaffe, but cauſing

sing herselfe to be carryed to the sepulcher of Saint *Clare*, and hauing there deuoutly offered her prayers, the day following obtayned, vvhat she vvith fayth demaunded, so that she returned home vpon her owne feete, who came thither supported by the feet of others.

A woman of *Perusia* had a swelling vpon her cheeke, which tormented her a long tyme, and besides had all ouer her body many ring-wormes and tettars; she had also her necke greater then her head: & often thinking on S. *Clare*, she one day went to her Church, where with great deuotion and a true fayth she made her prayers: & continuing by her sepulcher till euen within night, she fell into a

great ſweet, wherby the ſwelling began to wax dry and to ſhrinke, and ſo by little and little ſhe was ſo perfectly cured, that there remayned no ſhew of any ſkarre.

How two children were by Saint Clare *reſcued, and preſerued from the rage of wolues.*

CHAP. XXX.

THE valley of *Spoletum* was accuſtomed to be much afflicted with wolues, which did often prey there vpon mans fleſh. There dwelt a woman called *Bonna*, vpon the mount *Galion*, within the dioceſſe of *Aſſiſiū*, who hauing two children, had ſcarſe ended

ended her lamẽtations for the one which the wolues had deuoured, but whiles ſhe was buſied in her houſe they carried away the other.

The wolfe carryed the child to the top of a mountaine & grapled it by the throat, whileſt a labourer in the vineyardes hearing the pittifull cry of the child called the mother, and admoniſhed her to haue care of her Sonne, in regard he heard a crying voyce like to his: the woman not finding her Sonne, preſently belieued that the wolues had ſeyſed vpon him, and therfore began to raiſe her lamentations towardes heauen, deuoutly inuocating the help of Saint *Clare* in theſe tearmes: O bleſſed S. *Clare* haue compaſſion vpon me miſerable woman, and reſtore me my child.

Heare if thou pleaſe the prayers of an infortunate mother, and permit me not to continue in this rigorous deſolation. Whiles this poore woman ſo recommended her diſtreſſe to S. *Clare*, her neighbors furniſhed with vveapons, haſtened after the rauening wolfe, and coming to the top of the ſaid mountaine, they found that he had left the child wounded in the throate, whoſe woundes a dogge was licking, & ſo the child was ſafely recouered by the merits of S. *Clare*, who was inuocated by his mother, to whom he was brought, and was incontinently reſtored to perfect health.

A little girle of the towne of *Canary*, being about noone abroad in the field, where ſhe did ſome ſeruice to another woman, there came

came a wolfe, which being taken by the girle but for a dogge, he leapt vpon her necke, and tooke hold off her head. The other woman, and the mother of the girle there preſent ran after, and cried for help, inuocating Saint *Clare*: & it was admirable to heare that the child being in the teeth of the wolfe reprehended him, ſaying, Thou theefe, how canſt thou carry me further I being recommended to that holy virgin? The wolfe as daũted with thoſe words, gently ſet the girle vpõ the ground, & as a theefe found & taken in the fact, he fled: & the girle returned without any hurt vnto her mother.

How diuers were deliuered from drowning and danger of ſea, hauing inuocated S. Clare.

CHAP. XXXI.

A Shippe fraught vvith many perſons departing out of the port of Piſa, for the ile of *Sardinia*, the firſt night, there aroſe ſuch a terrible tempeſt, that the force therof leaked the bottome of the veſſell, which made apparent to all therein, that they were in moſt euidēt danger of ſhipwrake: wherfore they began to inuocate the Queene of heauen, and many other Saintes to aſſiſt them. At length perceiuing no appearance of their

their liues ſafety, they addreſſed themſelues to S. *Clare*, and vowed to her, that if by her interceſſion they were deliuered, they would goe all naked to their very ſhirtes, with their girdles about their neck, to viſit her ſacred Reliques at Aſſiſium, ech of them carrying a wax light of two pound in their hands. This vow being made, they ſavv three great lights deſcend frō heauen, the one whereof ſetled vpon the forepart of the ſhip, another vpon the poupe, and the third vpon the pumpe, by the vertue whereof the leakes where the water did enter was cloſed vp, and the ſea became ſo quiet and calme, that with a gratious wind the veſſell was accompanied and ſafely conducted by the ſaid lights to the

port of *Arestan*, where being arriued and landed, and the marchandize all safely put vpon shore, the said lights vanished, and (vvhich was admirable) the ship presently sunke, and vvas cast away: they which went out of her, acknowledging the miracle, and at their returne to Pisa deuoutly accomshed their vow, yielding infinit thankes to almighty God, and to the virgin S. *Clare* for the great benefit receiued by her intercession.

How

How Saint Clare *was canonized by the Pope* Alexander *the fourth.*

CHAP. XXXII.

POPE Innocent the fourth liued ſo little time after the death of S. *Clare*, that he could not Canonize her. The holy Sea hauing bin two yeares vacant, *Alexander* the fourth was choſen Pope, who being exceedingly deuoted, & a friend to piety, protectour of Religious, hauing heard true relation both of the miracles, vvhich our Lord Ieſus Chriſt wrought for the glory of his holy ſeruant, & of the renowne of her

vertues, which daily more and more diuulged themſelues in the Church, knovving alſo that her Canonization was generally deſired, his Holines being alſo induced by the aſſurance of ſo many miracles, began therfore to treat in the Conſiſtory of her Canonization.

Wherin to proceed more maturely, there were elected prudent and vertuous men to examine the ſaid miracles, & the irreprehenſible life of the Saint: vvhich being done, and this holy virgin being found, & proued to haue bin in her life an vnſpotted mirrour of all vertues, and to haue byn ennobled of Almighty God after her death by true and approued miracles, the day of her Canonizati-

on

on was appointed, when were preſent with his Holines many Cardinalls, Archbiſhops, Biſhops, other Prelates, and a great number of Prieſts and Religious with infinit noble men, Gentlemen and others, ech in their degree & quality, before whome the Pope propoſed this ſacred affayre, demaunding the opiniõ of the Prelats. who with one accord gaue conſent, and affectionatly beſought that the ſaid Saint might be canonized in the Church, as Ieſus Chriſt had glorifyed her in heauen. In this ſort then, three yeares after her happy deceaſe, Pope Alexander cauſed her ſolemnely to be enrolled in the Catalogue of Saintes, ordayning her feaſt to be celebrated with ſolemnity in the Church the 12. of Auguſt.

Auguſt. This Canonization was performed the yeare of grace 1255. and the firſt of the raigne of the Pope, to the prayſe and glory of our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt.

Heere endeth the life, and miracles of the glorious virgin S. Clare.

THE

THE LIFE OF S. AGNES SISTER TO S. CLARE

How S. Agnes *was by the holy F. S.* Francis *ſent to* Florence, *there to build a monaſtery.*

CHAP. I.

THE virgin & eſpouſe of our Redeemer Ieſus Chriſt, *Agnes*, & true companion of Saint *Clare*, aſwell in bloud

bloud, as in vertue & Religion, perſeuered & perſiſted in notable ſanctity of life in the monaſtery of *S. Damian:* & from the tyme of her entrance into Religion, euen to her death, ſhe alwayes wore a very rough hairecloath next her tender skin. Her ordinary refection was almoſt alwayes bread and water, being naturally very pittifull to euery one. *S. Francis* finding this virgin to haue obteyned of God, by meanes & aſſiſtance of her ſiſter, a worthy perfection, he ſent her to Florence, there to found a nevv Monaſtery of poore Siſters called mount *Cæli*, wherof Saint *Francis* made her Abbeſſe.

This holy virgin induced many ſoules to abandon the world, and to ſerue Ieſus Chriſt, which ſhe did

did by meanes of her pious conuerſation, & ſanctity of life, by holy diſcourſes, and wordes of God, that ſweeetly flowed out of her mouth: and as a perfect contemner of tranſitory thinges, & follower of Ieſus Chriſt, ſhe planted in this monaſtery (conformably to the deſire of the holy Father Saint *Francis*, & of S *Clare*) the obſeruance, & profeſſion of Euangelicall pouerty: but being exceedingly grieued with the abſence of her ſiſter, ſhe wrote this letter following vnto her, and to all the Religious of the monaſtery of S *Damian*, wherin ſhe had receiued her education, and ſpirituall nourture.

A copy of the Letter, which S. Agnes *wrote to her ſiſter* S. Clare, *and to all the other ſiſters of the monaſtery of* S. Damian.

CHAP. II.

TO the venerable & beloued Mother in our Lord Chriſt Ieſus, *Clare*, and to all her Conent, humble ſiſter *Agnes*, the leaſt of the diſciples of Ieſus Chriſt & of yours, commendeth herſelfe vnto you all, and proſtrate at your feete, doth yield you al ſubmiſſion and deuotion, wiſhing vnto you what is moſt pretious from the moſt high King of Kinges. To the end that all nature, which hath bin created

created of God, doe acknowledge it ſelfe to be ſuch, as it cannot perſiſt of it ſelfe in it owne eſſence, the diuine prouidence moſt prudently permitteth, that when any one eſteemeth himſelfe to be in proſperity, then is he drowned & plunged in aduerſities. This I tell you my moſt deare mother, that you may know, what affliction and extreame heauines poſſeſſeth my ſpirit, being ſo tormented, that hardly can I ſpeake: and this becauſe I am corporally ſeparated from you and my holy ſiſters, with whome I hoped to haue happily liued, and dyed in this world. So far is this my griefe from ſlacking, that it cõtinually increaſeth, which as it had a beginning, ſo do I beliue it will find no end in this

world, for it is so continuall, and familiar vnto me, that I greatly feare it will neuer forsake me.

I was perswaded that life and death should be a like, without power of any separation vpon earth, amongst them, who haue one same conuersation and life in heauen, & must haue one same sepulture: them I say, whom one same, equall naturall profession, and one same loue hath made sisters. But so far as I can see, being abandoned and afflicted on ech side, I am much mistaken. O my holy sisters, I beseech you to be reciprocally grieued with me, & let vs weep togeather, being assured, that you shall neuer experience any dolour comparable to that which I now feele, in being separated from them, with whome

whome Ieſus Chriſt had conioined me. This griefe tormenteth me inceſſantly, this fire burneth my hart continually, ſo that being on ech ſide afflicted, I know not what to thinke, neither doth any hope remaine, but to be aſſiſted by your prayers, that Almighty God eaſing this affliction, may make it tollerable vnto me.

O my moſt gratious Mother, vvhat ſhall I doe, and vvhat ſhall I ſay, ſith I know not that euer I ſhall ſee you more, or likewiſe my ſiſters? O that it were lawfull for me to vtter vnto you the conceipts of my ſoule, as I would deſire, or that I could open my hart vnto you vpon this paper: then ſhould you ſee the liuely and continuall dolours that torment me:

my ſoule burneth interiourly, be-
ing afflicted with an inceſſant fire
of loue: and my hart groaneth,
ſigheth, and lamenteth with deſire
of your preſence: myne eies can-
not haue their fill of weeping; and
albeit I ſeeke for ſome conſolation
againſt this bitternes, yet can I find
none: but euery thing turneth into
griefe, & much more, when I con-
ſider the meanes to ſee you. I am
intierly ſteeped in theſe anguiſhes,
hauing none that can comfort me
in this life, but that I receiue a little
conſolation from the liberall hand
of our Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, which
cauſeth me to beſeech you all to
giue thankes vnto his diuine ma-
ieſty, for this fauour and mercy ex-
tended, towardes me, & for that
through his grace, I find ſuch con-
cord

cord, peace, and charity in this Conuent, as by wordes cannot be expressed; these sisters hauing receiued me with exceeding loue & deuotion, yielding me Obedience, vvith extraordinary promptitude & reuerence.

They all with one accord recommend themselues to our Lord Iesus Christ, & to you my Sister, & to all the sisters of the monastery: & I recommend my selfe & them to your holy prayers, beseeching you as a mother to be mindfull of them, & of me, as of your daughters: & know you that they & I, will all the daies of our life, obserue & keepe your holy precepts and aduertisements. Besides I desire you should know, that the Pope hath accorded to whatsoeuer

I demaunded of him, conformably to your intention & myne, & particulerly in the matter you know; to wit, that we may not poſſeſſe any thing proper. I beſeech you my moſt deare mother, to procure of the Reuerent Father Generall, that he often viſit vs, to comfort vs in God, whoſe grace be with your ſpirit. Amen.

Of an extaſy of S. Agnes; *and how* S. Clare *ſaw her thrice crowned by an Angell.*

CHAP. III.

SAINT *Clare* in her laſt ſickneſs obteyned, that her ſiſter Saint *Agnes* might come to ſee her in

in the monaſtery of S. *Damian*, to keep her company during the few daies ſhe had to liue: & ſo S. *Agnes* hauing left her Couent, well grounded in Religion & ſanctity, ſhe came to Aſſiſium, where Saint *Clare* being one night in prayer apart from her ſiſter, ſhe neuertheles ſaw her, being alſo in prayer, lifted from the earth, & an Angell to crowne her thrice with ſo many ſeuerall crownes. The day following ſhe demaunded of her ſiſter, what prayer or contéplatió ſhe had made the night paſt: but ſhe of humility vnwilling to manifeſt her prayer, being at length inforced by Obedience, made her this relation: I conſidered the great goodnes, and patience of Almighty God, wherby he ſupporteth ſuch

enormous offéces of sinners; which I considered with a deep sorrow and compassion: then I thought, and yet doe thinke of the loue, which almighty God beareth to sinners, & how he indured death to saue them: thirdly I considered, & doe consider, & am with compassō exceedingly afflicted for the soules in purgatory, & their great torments; & because they cannot help themselues, I asked mercy for them of the most sacred wounds of our Redeemer Iesus Christ.

How

How S. Agnes *ſent* S. Clares *veyle to the monaſtery of* Florence, *and of her death and tranſlation to Saint* George *in Aſiſium, with all her Religious into a new Couent.*

CHAP. IIII.

AFTER the death of S *Clare*, Saint *Agnes* ſent her blacke veyle, which ſhe did ordinarily weare, to the poore Religious of Mount *Cæſi*, which ſhe had founded at Florence, which ſhe did, in regard of her great amity towardes them, and that they might inherit ſome Reliques of S. *Clare* for their comfort and deuoti-

on. That veyle is yet in the ſaid monaſtery, where it is ſo carefully preſerued, that in ſubſtance and colour it ſeemeth ſtill new. There is likewiſe to be ſeene in the ſame monaſtery a cloak of S. *Francis*, by which Reliques our Lord worketh many miracles. A little after the death of S. *Clare*, S. *Agnes* alſo deſired to be preſent at the marriage of the lambe, whither ſhe was inuited: but ſhe firſt receiued the conſolation, which S. *Clare* had promiſed her, that before ſhe departed out of this life, ſhe ſhould ſee her Spouſe Ieſus Chriſt, as a taſt of the eternall felicityes, whereto ſhe was to be eleuated, & conducted by her ſweet ſpouſe Chriſt Ieſus. She dyed the 56. yeare of her age, repleniſhed with perfect ſanctity;

ty; and being deliuered out of this priſon, she went to poſſeſſe the Kingdome with Angels, and the holy virgins, that had bin conſecrated to Ieſus Chriſt, in which glory theſe two ſiſters, & daughters of Sion, companions in heauen by nature & grace, doe prayſe God without end.

There aſſembled a great multitude of people vpon the death of S. *Agnes*, and they with great deuotion aſcended with a ladder the monaſtery of Saint *Damian*, hoping thereby to receiue ſome ſpirituall conſolation of ſanctity, but it hapned that the chaine which held the ladder did ſlip, ſo that all thoſe, who were vpon it, fell downe one vpon another, which made a great noyſe and clamour by thoſe who

were

were hurt; & hauing with a ſtrong faith inuocated S. *Agnes*, were all cured. The ſaid holy virgin was interred at S. *Damian*, but afterwardes was tranſported into the Church of S *George*, where ſhe ſtill remayneth togeather with her ſiſter in Aſſiſium, by the which Church the Cittizens haue built a faire monaſtery intituled Saint *Clare*, whither were afterward remoued the Religious ſiſters of S. *Damian*: which was done to preuent many inconueniences, that might arriue vnto thē being without the Citty. The ſaid Religious brought from S *Damian* many Reliques, and perticularly the Crucifix, which ſpake to S. *Francis*, at the beginning of his conuerſion, which is extant in the ſaid monaſtery

ſtery of *S. Clare*: and the Friars Minors are at S. *Damian*.

Of many miracles wrought by Almighty God, through the merits of S. Agnes.

CHAP. V.

A Girle of Peruſia had a cancred fiſtula in her throate, who hauing deuotion to S. *Agnes*, viſited her ſepulcher. The Religious there hauing vnbound her ſoare, at the entry of the Couent & then hauing with a ſtrong faith offered her prayers, ſhe aroſe ſound, and returned to her houſe exceedingly comforted, yielding thankes to God, and to his ſeruant.

There

There was a Religious ſiſter at our Lady of Angells of Peruſia, vvho had a mortall ſoare in her breaſt, which the Phiſitians had iudged to be incurable; in it there were three holes, ſo that the Religious womē exhorted her to beare this affliction vvith patience, as proceeding from the hand of God, and to conforme herſelfe to his diuine will. This diſeaſed ſiſter being alwaies of mind to recommend herſelfe to S. *Agnes*, kneeling one day before the Altar, ſhe vvith much deuotion commended herſelfe to the holy ſeruant of God, demaunding of her redreſſe of her infirmity, vvherewithall falling falling into a gentle and ſweet ſlumber, Saint *Agnes* appeared vnto her, and with her hand

hand touched her mortall wound, with which visitatiō she was sweetly comforted, and cured; and at her awaking finding herselfe soūd, she gaue infinit thankes to God, & to her aduocate S. *Agnes*.

Another Religious womā of the monāstery of Venice, had an impostume in her breast, which was opened by the Phisitians, & found so dangerous, that they allotted her a very little time to liue. This poore sister therefore in this distresse, recommended herselfe to the two sisters, S. *Clare* and Saint *Agnes*, and about midnight these two Saints, as most skilfull phisitians, brought boxes of most pretious oyntments, and accompanyed with many virgins entred into the Infirmary, where this sicke sister

was,

was, who were ſeene by many Religious, & drawing neere to her bed, Saint *Clare* ſaid vnto her: Siſter, Be you aſſured that you ſhalbe cured by the power & goodnes of God, and by the meritts of Saint *Agnes*. The ſicke Religious not knowing who ſpake vnto her, doubted of this reuelation: & the Saintes replyed, that they were Phiſitians of Aſſiſium: then Saint *Agnes* annointed the ſoares with the oyntment ſhe had brought, & ſo the viſion diſappeared, & the diſeaſed ſiſter was in ſuch ſort cured of her mortall wound, that no appearance remayned therof.

Another Religious of the monaſtery of Saint *Clare* in Aſſiſium, had byn for ſixteene yeare together afflicted with ſuch an infirmity,

ty, that the other Religious held her for a lepar. This diseased creature besought S. *Agnes* to pray to the Virgin of heauen for her recouery. and this prayer being performed with a vow, the Religious was incontinently cured, & freed from all remainder of her infirmity.

A Burgesse of Assisium had byn long time lame by the blow of a stone receiued vpon his foote, and being hopeless of humane remedy, vpon the feast of S. *Agnes*, he went so well as he could to her Church, and with strong fayth and deuotion fell vpon his knees before her Altar. His prayer being ended, he arose sound, and lusty, which he recounted to many, and thanked almighty God for it.

A Painter called *Palmero* being in a dangerous ſicknes, & by the phiſitians giuen ouer as dead, one night after his ſpeach was loſt, his brother expecting in his opinion his laſt breathing, was exceedingly diſquieted, and coming to his bed ſide, and lamenting him as already dead, he fell vpon his knees, addreſſed his prayers to S. *Agnes*, & with aboundance of teares and great confidence made a vow, that if his Brother by her meritts and intercetſion might be cured, ſo oftē as he painted her image, he would ſet a Crowne of gold vpon her head. This prayer and vow being ended, the ſicke party incontinently began to ſpeake, as if he had awakened out of a profound ſleep, and called for meate, and did hungerly

gerly eate, then aroſe from his bed, ſaying, that two Religious women came to viſit him being in his agony, & reputed for dead, & that the ſame viſitation had ſuch force, as it left him perfectly cured, as he appeared.

A vvoman of Aſſiſium had a ſonne of 12. yeares old that had an impoſtume in his breaſt, where the canker was ſo increaſed, that it made it in ſuch ſort venemous, as it exceeded the Phiſitians skill to cure it: this woman hauing vnderſtood, that by the meritts of Saint *Agnes*, Almighty God had cured ſuch diſeaſes, the commaunded her ſonne often to viſit her ſepulcher, and deuoutly to recommend himſelfe vnto her: which he did in ſuch ſort, that approaching one

euening ſo neere her ſelpulcher, that his mortall ſoare touched the ſame, and there falling a ſleepe, he ſo remained till the next morning, when awaking he found himſelfe intierly cured: for which hauing thanked God & his Saint, he returned to aduertiſe his mother, affirming that S. *Clare*, and Saint *Agnes* appeared vnto him in the night, and that S. *Clare* brought an oyntment, wherewith Saint *Agnes* hauing annointed him, he was preſently cured.

Of possessed persons deliuered by the merits of S. Agnes: and of certayne other miracles.

CHAP. VI.

THERE was a child of vi. yeares old in Assisium, who playing amõg other childrẽ, an vnknovvne man gaue him a greene beane codde, which the boy opening, three of the beanes fell to the ground, and the fourth only he did eate, yet so soone as he came home, he vomited extremely, then beganne to tumble, and furiously to behaue himselfe, turning and rouling his eyes in his head in such sort, as it well appeared, that he indured extreme torment: and his

gesture so terrifyed them who beheld him, that they iudged him possessed: and therfore his Father, and many other of his kindred brought him the next morning to the Church of Saint *Clare*, where hauing offered their prayers for him, and inuocated the intercession of S. *Agnes*, the child a little after began to cry, and barke as a dogge, then cryed out, Take heed, there are two Diuells already gone out, say one *Aue Maria*, and the third wilbe gone, which being presently done, the Diuell withall left the child.

A woman of *Fullinium*, being tormented with many wicked spirits, her Father and grand-mother vowed to go with her to Assisium, to visit the sepulcher of S. *Agnes*, with

with faith and hope, that by her merits she should be deliuered, & so this possessed woman remaining before the sepulcher of the Saint, from the ninth houre til euensong, she felt herselfe freed from the Diuells that possessed her. This was done vpon the feast of S. *Francis* the kindred of this deliuered woman offered an image of wax weighing two poundes, to the sepulcher of the Saint, in acknowledgement of the grace and fauour receiued.

A man of Perusia with a continuall feuer had in his body an impostume, whereof the phisitians gaue their iudgement, he would in short time end his dayes: wherfore a woman called *Celiola*, admonished him to recommend himselfe

to Saint *Agnes*, and to vow the visiting of her sepulcher; which hauing done, and his prayers ended, his infirmity ended withall, being cured both of the one, & the other disease; for which not being vngratefull, he visited the sayd sepulcher, & euery where preached the prayses of the holy virgin, giuing thankes to Almighty God for such a fauour.

A Religious womā of the monastery of S. *Clare* in Assisiū, had lost the sight of one eye, & was in danger to loose the other, but finding that no humane application did auaile her, she recommended herselfe to Saint *Agnes*, and the other Religious of her monastery also prayed for her, who as she one time prayed in the Church, saw a

Woman

woman, that came to her and ſaid: ſiſter open your eye, for your ſight is recouered: and ſo opening her eye ſhe clearly ſaw, but ſhe could no more ſee the woman that ſpake vnto her: only ſhe was aſſured that it was *S. Agnes*, to whome ſhe had hartily recommended herſelfe.

Vitula the wife of *Matthew de Loupe* at S. *Francis* gate in Aſſiſium, had a ſonne called *Martin*, that had a deep ſoare in his throat, and another in his ſhoulder, both mortall, whence iſſued ſuch an offenſiue ſauour, that it was not poſſible to come neere him. At length after many remedies had in vaine bin tryed, his mother recommended him to S. *Agnes*, to whome hauing with a deuout hart offered her prayers, the Saint one night

appeared vnto her richly attyred with a diademe of gold vpon her head, and a branch of Lilly in her right hand, and ſaid vnto her: My daughter diſquiet not thy ſelfe for thy ſonne, for he ſhalbe cured, and deliuered from perill; which this woman hauing heard, ſhe aroſe full of comfort, and went to the monaſtery of S. *Clare*, & recounted this apparition to the Abbeſſe and the Religious: then ſhe heard Maſſe, which being ended, the Religious ſhewed to the Mother and the Sonne the ſacred Reliques of the Saint, and at the inſtant her Sonne was cured of the impoſtume in his throat only. After that, Saint *Agnes* appeared to him in viſion, togeather with another woman, who brought a violl full of oynt-

ment,

ment : Saint *Agnes* then ſayd to the child, my Sonne how do you? whereto he anſwered : I am by the meritts of Saint *Agnes* cured of the impoſtume in my throat, but that vvhich is vpon my ſhoulder procureth me extreme affliction. The Saint replyed, I will cure this, as I did the other in thy throat : then ſhe vnbound the ſayd impoſtume, tooke of the playſter, and caſt it vpon the ground ; then applyed thereto the oyntment, vvhich her companion had brought, and inſtantly the child was perfectly cured. When his mother came to ſee him, ſhe found the playſters, vpon the ground, and her Sonne ſound and luſty, vvho particulerly recounted vnto her the ſayd

vision,

vision, vvhich afterward vvas generally diuulged. This happened in the yeare 1350.

The end of the life of Saint Agnes.

THE

THE LIFE OF ANOTHER S. AGNES, WHO WAS

Daughter to the King of Bohemia, *and Religious of the Order of* S. Clare.

CHAP. I.

IN the beginning of this Religious Order, there was another Virgin beſides the precedent called *Agnes*, as illuſtrious in ſanctity,

ty, as in bloud, for she was daughter to the King of *Bohemia*, who promised her in marriage to the Emperour *Frederike*: and this holy virgin hauing heard the worthy reputation of S. *Clara* who then liued, by such as came from Rome & Assisium, being inspired of God, she besought the King her Father, to giue her leaue, to serue rather a celestiall then a terrestriall spouse. But the King knowing that he could not recall his word, & that whatsoeuer excuse he shold alleage to breake this marriage, the Emperour would sinisterly interprete, he vtterly denyed her. Now the virgin hauing found the drift & cause of this deniall, assured her Father, that if he would accord to whatsoeuer she demaũded, she

ſhe would vndertake, the that Emperor ſhould condeſcend therunto, preſuming confidently vpon the fauour of Ieſus Chriſt.

She knew well to deliuer herſelfe from many other allegations with ſo good a grace, & with ſuch perſuaſiue tearmes that ſhe purchaſed her Fathers conſent to what ſhe deſired, without further ſeeking, the approbation of the Emperours wherupon this Princeſſe preſently ſent for certaine Friars Minors of *Magnes*, where they had a Couent, who coming to her, did ſhortly after conſecrate vnto God this Royall plant, with many other gentlewomen of great families in *Bohemia*, to whome they gaue the habit of Religion, inſtructing them in the life and Rule of *S. Clare*. The

King

King desiring to assigne a good pension, & to bestow vpon the Monastery vvhere his daughter was, a good renenew, to supply the necessities thereof, she formally withstood him, purposing to liue & dye poore, & to be maintayned by almes, conformably to her rule, rigorously obseruing the intention of the holy Father Saint *Francis*, & Saint *Clare*, in the vow of pouerty, which is yet to this day in the same manner obserued in the sayd Monastery, which is in *Prague*, the chiefest Citty in the Kingdome of *Bohemia*: and this foundation layd by this holy Princesse, hath alwayes bin furnished with gentlewomen.

Now the Emperour vnderstanding that his promised Loue had abando-

abandoned the world, he was at the first apprehension exceedingly troubled; but considering vvith more maturity, that she had not forsaken him to take another man, but for Iesus Christ himselfe, he was at length satisfyed, contented, and comforted.

S. *Clare* being aduertised of all that this Princesse had done, and of her life and perfection, who also had written, and expresly sent a messenger, to acknowledge obedience vnto her, as to her mother, & mistresse, auouching herselfe her humble disciple; S. *Clare* answered her by a letter filled with much feruour and consolation, & sent her in token of amity, & good will, a girdle, a veyle, a cuppe of wood, and a dish wherin the Saint her-

ſelfe accuſtomed to eate, & many like ſmall thinges, which the holy Princeſſe with great deuotion accepted. Our Lord wrought many miracles by the ſayd Reliques, which euer afterward were kept in the ſayd Monaſtery, with very great deuotion and Reuerence.

The renowne of this Princeſſe being diuulged ouer all Germany, there were founded many monaſteries of poore Religious in her imitation, which were filled with many daughters of Princes, Duks, Earles, and other great Lords, and gentlemen of that Countrey, who in imitation of Saint *Clare*, & the ſayd Princeſſe *Agnes* abandoned the world, & the vanities thereof, and eſpouſed, for eternity, Ieſus Chriſt, ſeruing him alone in po-

uerty,

uerty, & in humility. This Saint *Agnes* of *Bohemia* being illuſtrated by many vertues & miracles, hauing aſſembled an infinit number of Religious in diuers Couents, & hauing perſeuered with them in all perfection of vertue, ſhe left this tranſitory world, to take eternall poſſeſſion of her glorious celeſtiall Spouſe Chriſt Ieſus, who honoured her, and made her bleſſed, as he hath manifeſted by mamany miracles, which he hath wrought by her great merits and interceſſiõs. The Emperour *Charls* the fourth, who was alſo King of *Bohemia*, was two ſeuerall tymes deliuered from death by the interceſſion of this celeſtiall Princeſſe, & therfore at his death he inioyned his Sonne *VVenceſlaus*, and ſucce-

ſour to the Empire, to procure her Canonization, but he was hindred by important, and continuall troubles and affayres, that diſabled him to execute the pious and iuſt deſires of his Father.

Of many other Religious, that florished primitiuely in the Order of Saint Clare.

CHAP. II.

THERE was another holy Religious of the royal bloud of Polonia called *Salome*, whoſe ſanctity was manifeſted by by diuers miracles, which God wrought after her death. She by her merits deliuered women from

perill of death in trauell of child, many lame were reſtored to the vſe of their lymmes, blynd recouered ſight, and wounded perſons were cured.

A holy Religious of Padua, called *Helena*, floriſhed in great perfectiõ of life in the monaſtery which was builded by the Seraphicall Father S. *Francis*, and in which the bleſſed Father S. *Antony* of Padua yielded his ſpirit vnto Almighty God. This holy Religious liuing in that place, after ſhe had there obtained of God many vertues, ſhe was tryed by Ieſus Chriſt, and refined as gold in the furnace of afflictions; for ſhe kept her bed depriued of all corporall force, yea and of her ſpeach for fifteene years, during all which time, ſhe ordina-

rily demonſtrated by ſignes & geſtures an exceeding great alacrity & ioy in her hart.

Our Lord reueiled many things to this Saint, which ſhe manifeſted to the Religious, who ſeriouſly recorded the ſame to be knowne to poſterity. The ſaid Religious being demaunded how the ſicke Religious ſiſter could make them vnderſtand thoſe wordes, ſith ſhe could not ſpeake, they anſwered that themſelues then obſerued ſo ſtrict a ſilence, that they opened their neceſſities by ſignes, vvhich vvere well vnderſtood among them, for expreſſing whatſoeuer they deſired to haue knowne. And in this had they vnderſtood the ſayd Saint, whoſe body for many yeares after, the

ſayd

ſaid Religious ſiſters did ſhew to ſuch, as in deuotion repayred to ſee it, remayning entiere, and incorruptible, yea her nayles and haire did grow, as if ſhe had byn liuing.

By her merits God wrought many miracles, and particulerly vpon the Lord Marqueſſe of Parma, who was of the family of *Lupi* called *Boniface*, who being in the anguiſh of death, his Lady making a vow to this Saint *Helene* for his health, it was perfectly reſtored vnto him.

In the beginning of the Order of Saint *Clare*, there was alſo a daughter of the King of Hungary called *Cuiga*, ſiſter vnto bleſſed S. *Elizabeth* the widdow, who hauing taken the habit, & made pro-

feſſion of the rule of S. *Clare*, became ſo famous after the death of S. *Elizabeth* in ſanctity and miracles, both during her life, and at her death, that her Canonization is treated of at *Rome*.

FINIS.